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IMPORT AND OUTLOOK  
OF SOCIALISM

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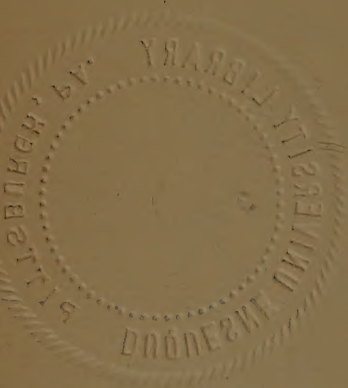
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TO  
DR. M. ROWENA MORSE  
WHO WITH ALL THE PROPHETIC  
IS LOOKING FOR  
"THE CITY WHICH HAS FOUNDATIONS"  
THE IDEAL COMMONWEALTH, WHEREIN THE WORDS  
LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY  
ARE MORE THAN A HOLLOW SOUND

AUG 17 1959

*Our slogan is Social Justice, which means  
equal opportunity, and reward proportioned  
to service. . . . .*

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# Import and Outlook of Socialism

## CHAPTER I

### SOCIAL UNREST SINCE THE AMERICAN ERA 1776

The American Revolution, which carried with it the first clear declaration of the rights of man made by representatives of a people, was the signal of oncoming social disturbances the greatest in history. Our fathers uttered a pronouncement so far-reaching, so notably ahead of their time, ahead of their own practice even (slavery was then a fact recognized in all the States), as to make it an ideal to be striven for through the centuries rather than a declaration of an existing, undisputed equality, or of a universal inherent right of liberty accorded by the signers, and to the defense of which they pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. So decidedly is this the case that in later time some of us, who might be called their great-grandchildren, seeing the actual conditions out of which the preamble to the immortal Declaration came, and seeing, too, how far almost all the world even yet is from admitting the

validity of it, have, without much disapproval, heard its assumptions characterized as "glittering generalities," unrealizable in the actual world. But Calhoun, who first made this fling, and made it from an obvious motive, is a name less revered than Jefferson, and Jefferson is rather ennobled than otherwise in that he suffered his pen here to be guided by the soul of Rousseau. To be sure, as S. J. Randall said, it was not in defense of "natural rights," or to establish a doctrine of philosophy, that Americans drew the sword, but to redress specific grievances; nevertheless it was perfectly in order to set forth at the outset certain great principles which should forever give depth and dignity to an instrument otherwise made up of more or less petty complaints against the British king. Thus, though it be incidentally, the American Revolution won the credit of entering upon a conflict which later took on vast proportions, became world-wide, and has not to this day reached its climax.

As the first sparks kindling the conflagration came over from Europe in the writings of certain French philosophers, so the light of it shone back and fired the breasts of Frenchmen for their far more resounding Revolution. As the events of that marvelous uprising began to unroll themselves, enthusiastic lovers of liberty the world over took them to indicate the dawn of a new day in which the social regeneration of mankind could be worked out unhindered by any obstacles. But no secure basis for a democracy had been prepared. The middle class — the class that ac-

tually dethroned the king, took over the government, and despoiled the nobles — had their own interests at heart which they did not neglect; the masses, on whom in a free republic things must soon or late depend, were in the depths of ignorance, and, if they could not vote, could carry pikes, and at the beck of their leaders by very force of numbers overpower any assembly. And so it happened that the fine frenzy of revolution for the establishment of justice and the rights of man had hardly more than destroyed one despotism ere it went hopelessly astray into a Reign of Terror, a mad exhibition of the policy of judicially murdering opponents in the name of liberty, from which the issue was easy into the immemorial folly of foreign conquest. So the cult of military glory followed quick upon the cult of the goddess of Reason, and its insatiable altars drank the blood of millions, exhausted the resources of France and of Europe, leaving behind, in mocking compensation for untold agonies and incalculable destruction, an *arc de triumph* and a few other imposing, but already embarrassing, monuments of glory which were better called shame. But it was such a blinding glory that some belated spirits even yet are unable to see that the great man who wrapped himself in it was the chief scourge and monster of the modern world. Whatever else may be said of him, scourge and monster he assuredly was, and not more because of the ravage and cruelty of his wars than for his arresting and setting back for many a year

the dial of progress in democratic government. The Revolution was discredited in almost all eyes by its eventuating in a succession of ever more unspeakable horrors. A great reaction set in, and for thirty years after Napoleon was disposed of scarce any one around the whole world dared breathe a word against tyrants, or to treat as anything more than a rhapsody the doctrine that all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. The very word "liberty" came to be suspect of sedition, where it was not used by tyrants themselves to deceive the people. Despots sat once more securely on their thrones.

#### ECONOMIC CHANGES SUPERVENE

The so notable subsidence of revolutionary sentiment did not mean that politically the world was content; it meant only that the world-masters had largely succeeded in tying the tongues of political reformers who would again venture to call in question the divine right of kings, or "rhapsodize" over the universally inherent rights of man. Radical politics thus tabued, the drift of thought on social matters turned to questions of economics and the industrial life, which was taking on new phases. The situation of the workers had been rendered exceedingly critical since 1780 by the introduction of machinery to do work before done by hand, a change which completely revolutionized the whole system of production other than agricultural. The old order

of things under which every producer had, or could have, his own shop and in it his own simple implements, gave way to an order requiring capital to do anything, requiring buildings of some size, expensive machines, and many hired operatives. Enormous increase of efficiency was attained, greatly swelling the product and lowering its price in every industry, in almost every case driving the small producer, working in the old way, out of business, and forcing him to seek his livelihood as an employé in some large establishment. The number of persons thus compelled to turn to the great factories for employment far exceeded the demand for their services, as every man at a machine displaced a considerable number of hand workers, and they were inevitably brought into sharp competition with one another for what places there were, with the result that wages were next to nothing, barely what would suffice to keep body and soul together. So the centers of the new industry became promptly the centers of poverty and wretchedness, and such, to a somewhat less appalling degree, they have mostly remained to this day. At the same time the profits of the new productive enterprises, particularly in England where they were earliest developed, were very large, amounting to fifty, even one hundred or more per cent. on the investment, speedily building up great fortunes. The gulf between rich and poor deepened and widened, augmenting the hideousness of a spectacle always so sadly common, of two classes living, one flaunting, the other drudging,

both dying, side by side, and yet apart as heaven is from earth.

The hardships often extreme growing out of the industrial situation in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the miseries untold to which the toilers were reduced, tended vastly more to their discontent than ever had any tyranny of any government. It was the *bourgeoisie*, the middle class, that in 1789 quarreled with the king, led the Revolution, and profited by it. Fattened on the spoils of the church and the nobility, or prospered in new undertakings, they had become the comfortable, the well-to-do class. In all lands men of this class were pushing the great enterprises and reaping the great harvests. Naturally they were satisfied with things as they found them, loyal to the existing order. Not so with the burden-bearers, the hewers of wood and drawers of water; or they in yet worse plight who found no wood to hew, no water to draw. And these were and always have been the great part of the human race. They had been patient, all-enduring in building the pyramids of Egypt, the temples and hanging gardens of Babylon; with scarce a murmur they had tramped to their death over the world with the world-conquerors; but now some of them had acquired a little knowledge, some had seen better days, and not a few in face of starvation openly revolted at their lot. Here and there, in desperation, they marched on the mills and destroyed the machines, which they took for mortal enemies, invaders of their domain, plun-



derers of the poor, snatching the food from their mouths, the clothes from their backs.\* But this was to contend with fate, to fight against the gods. Laying hold of the forces of Nature and applying them to the work of production, putting upon them the burden of toil which human hands before had borne, is the great step forward in the industrial world, the greatest ever taken, — the natural, inevitable step, and one which, under the proper social order, so far from inducing hardship to any one would have been fecund of blessing to all sorts and conditions of men round the whole earth, lightening every load, creating plenty, carrying into all households comfort, light, and joy. The very fact that multitudes were made miserable by the harnessing of steam and waterfalls to do the drudgery of life is itself proof positive that there was something radically wrong in the existing social order, something not to be glossed over, no minor defect calling for a little tinkering, but a structural viciousness, beyond remedy short of fundamental change.

To this view, after Napoleon's banishment had left Europe time to reflect, many thinkers came, and thenceforth with them the pressing problem was less a political than a distinctly social one. Some of them

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\* Shortsighted as this now appears to have been in the workers, in extenuation it is well to remember that even long after, many, including so distinguished a writer as John Ruskin, took the ground that the way out of labor troubles was to discontinue the use of machinery and return to hand-production.

saw and sympathized with the suffering and the ominous disquietude of the toilers, and with rare self-devotion undertook measures for their relief; others, smitten themselves with a great unrest in view of the way the momentous social problem was left to drift, urged upon the State the duty, to take precedence of all other duties, of looking after the most vital interests of the great body of its people, and, by managing the great industries, prevent the abuse of them.

#### THE WORK OF SAINT-SIMON

The snows of only two winters had whitened the blood-drenched field of Waterloo when one of those geniuses came to the front who seem to rise now and then as if on purpose to make amends, materially or spiritually, for the losses inflicted on the world by another of their countrymen:\* Claude Henri, Comte de Saint-Simon. Of aristocratic birth, as his title indicates, Saint-Simon early freed himself of the exclusive feeling characteristic of his class; and seeing the backward trend of France,—seeing too the wrongs done to the great mass of the toilers, who, driven to desperation by the situation in which they found themselves, must ultimately, if denied social justice, either break out in violent revolution or so degenerate physically and morally as to imperil the

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\* It will be remembered that Huxley said of Pasteur that his material service alone made good to France the indemnity of five milliards francs paid to Germany,—price of the folly, not to say the crime, of Napoleon III.

future of the whole race, — undertook with prophetic self-consecration to devise a social system which, resting on established scientific and ethical principles, should be free from the fatal drawbacks of the present order. He dissociated his system as far as possible from revolutionary politics, so far, indeed, that he even had hopes of its being accepted by Louis XVIII. and put immediately into operation. It will help toward an understanding of the social unrest we are considering to glance at this and some of the subsequent plans for meeting it.

To the mind of Saint-Simon the work of bettering human conditions, after all the stress and strain of a most perturbed generation, had made slight headway compared with what remained to be done. The Revolution had attempted something, but had soon lost its way and passed as a vision of the night. Napoleon had come and gone, leaving little more than tracks of fire and blood across the continent — phantoms of death and hell passing with a deluded world under the name of glory. A social reconstruction was called for, which should put an end to the inimical competition of men with one another and the exploiting of the many for the aggrandizement of the few. Private fortunes should no more be ground out of the toil of an army of operatives, but all enterprises, great and small, should be so managed that the proceeds would have equitable distribution among the contributors. The grave problem before Saint-Simon was to lay out a scheme to this end which

might reasonably be expected to work, and which, put in operation, should not disastrously quench the spirit of enterprise or benumb the power of initiative on which material progress so much depends. On this latter score, while admittedly some decline would result, it could be urged that a system of industry might be acceptable though it did tend to weaken the ambition of a few if at the same time it greatly strengthened the ambition of the many. It could be said that the overweening eagerness of the managers to get vastly rich is a blight on them and on the world, leading them often into such incessant and exhaustive outlay of vital force that they do not live out half their days, or live them in a sad neglect of what are really the best things in life. What is yet worse, this devouring ambition to gain a private advantage, while it develops enterprise, prompts that exploiting of the workers which takes all ambition out of them. The world therefore, thought Saint-Simon, can afford some curbing of the abnormal energy of the chiefs of industry if it can have an uplift and a quickening given to the spirit of its toilers. He held that the world would not lose the services of these chiefs if their private gains were very considerably restricted. He would keep them at their posts of management. They might work a little less furiously, but they would work sufficiently, for every man delights in the exercise of his capabilities. He proposed that the State assume oversight of all industries, and arrange affairs so that the products, or the value of them, should

go to the persons engaged in the just proportion that their several efforts contribute to the production. A formidable undertaking no doubt, and one not to be perfectly carried out. Strictly equitable distribution would be difficult if not impossible to arrive at; there would be unavoidable dissatisfaction here and there; but no distribution could be made on this plan which would approach in inequity the actual distribution of profits in the great industries as then and now conducted.

Saint-Simon's plan would convert the capable chiefs of industry, the managers of all enterprises, — who in his day as now were seeking to turn into their own coffers the largest possible part of the earnings of the largest possible number of people, — into public servants laboring not for their own good only but for the good as well of the people serving under them. In lieu of greed he urged generosity; in lieu of rivalry he would bring in fraternity. So his scheme allied itself in his thought with the teaching of Jesus, and he came to call it "The New Christianity," which at the same time he declared was primitive Christianity, whose fundamental principle he held to be: "Men ought to regard one another as brothers." This principle, modernized and glorified, he made to read: "Religion must aid society in its chief purpose, which is the most rapid improvement of the lot of the poor." In these terms he lifted the question of social reconstruction into a religion. And, indeed, he found it nowise difficult to show that he was

following after Jesus, who distinctly said his mission was especially to the poor, in whose welfare he ever showed himself most concerned. And it was apparent to Saint-Simon, as it must be to every one who candidly considers the subject, that Christianity as it now exists is not based on any such principle. On the contrary, in the Christian more than ever in the pagan world, and more and more as wealth increases, the idle are surfeited in luxury, while diligent toilers are quite generally without the comforts, often without the necessities of life.

That good men and true, profound thinkers in the highest fields, should be taking such ground in the first quarter of the nineteenth century (Saint-Simon died in 1825), is as salient an indication of the grave social unrest of the time as was the smashing of machines by riotous workmen in the great centers of industry. So heavily lay upon his conscience the doing of this first great socialistic work that he devoted to it the best years of his life and spent on it his entire fortune, so that ere he was through with his task he was in the straitened circumstances of another lover of mankind of whom it is said that he "had not where to lay his head." In a letter appealing for help he wrote:

"For fifteen days I have lived upon bread and water. I have worked without fire, and have sold everything but my clothes to defray the cost of copying my work for the printer. It is my interest in the public well-being, my desire to discover a means for terminating in some gentle manner the fearful crisis



in which all European society now finds itself, that has brought me to this state of distress. It is, therefore, without blushing that I confess my poverty, and solicit the succor necessary to enable me to continue my work."

#### DEPRESSION OF THE PERIOD

The history of the period we are surveying makes it appear that there was always a crisis of some sort on, or an apprehension of one impending, and it is hard to tell when or where things were at their worst. The times of which Saint-Simon speaks — 1816-20 — were certainly bad enough on both continents. In America great distress prevailed. We are told, "The larger part of the people, even with the utmost economy, could hardly obtain the very necessaries of life." "Never," says McMaster, "in the history of our country had the sufferings of the dependent and unfortunate classes been so forcibly and persistently brought to the attention of the public; never before had so many worthy citizens been reduced to want." Wages were very low, twenty-five cents a day in winter, only two or three times as much in summer, with employment hard to find even at those rates. For this pittance men worked fourteen hours. Women were paid much less and found it yet harder to get anything to do by which to earn a living. By a week's sewing, when it was to be had, a woman could bring in fifty to seventy-five cents. Among laborers there was universal murmuring, though none of them

knew on whom or on what to lay the blame for all these woes. And of the better instructed class no enlightened man arose, as in France, to point out whence such crying evils spring. Popular leaders were absorbed in politics or in theology, to the neglect of vital questions of economics.

In Europe the crisis following the Napoleonic wars was more acute. Disbanded armies threw a multitude of men into the ranks of the unemployed at a time when the rapid development of labor-saving machinery was trenching more and more upon the workers' province. In England particularly, where the cotton industry was making the greatest strides, the situation was most distressing. Sympathetic souls among the gentry were deeply moved and set in the way of grave reflection. But it is noteworthy that the one most stirred, and who most stirred his countrymen and the world over the matter, came up from the working class. This man was Robert Owen, one of the most capable chiefs of industry that has ever lived.

#### THE GENIUS OF OWEN

Born in poverty, by his own exertions he had risen at nineteen years of age to be the manager of a cotton-mill employing five hundred hands, where the least of his distinctions was the spinning of the first bales of cotton exported from the United States. This was in the last decade of the eighteenth century. In 1800, having married Miss Dale, whose father was

proprietor of a larger factory at New Lanark, thirty miles up the Clyde from Glasgow, he entered upon the management of that concern. The life of the operatives there, as in all the factories of the time, was most pitiable. The hours were shamefully long both for men and women. Children of tender age were employed early and late, and under conditions debasing to mind and body, turning many into cripples and more into criminals. The whole atmosphere of the place was physically, mentally, and morally hideous. The operatives were living in squalor, an illiterate and for the most part drunken, vicious set. But capital had thought nothing of this; the property was paying well.

Owen, though through his marriage become part owner, had higher than financial interests in mind. He would transform the lives of the two thousand people connected with the mill, and who made up the population of the village. Not to dwell here on the measures by which he sought to accomplish this noble purpose, suffice it to say they were gentle, considerate, humane; and that he so far succeeded that the results might with much complacency be set before the world. The village was really renovated; the inhabitants became orderly, the children were in school; compared with what had been, there were signs of comfort and contentment. But the manager was not satisfied with what he had been able to do. The facilities in his hands were inadequate; he would have power to do more. Meanwhile his considerable success in a

before unheard-of undertaking had made him a conspicuous figure in Great Britain. He had particularly attracted the attention of certain wealthy philanthropists, and was encouraged in 1813 to go up to London and lay before them a scheme he had devised for working out a much greater good. This scheme was the formation of a new company with a paid-in capital of \$650,000 with which to purchase and develop the New Lanark property; stock subscriptions being made under express condition that dividends should never exceed five per cent. per annum; the excess earnings to be expended at the discretion of the manager for the benefit of the operatives. Without much difficulty the subscribers were found,—a feat which shows the confidence he inspired, and the hold his ideas took upon such men of the moneyed class as still had in their hearts consideration for the toiling poor. Among the honored names composing the new firm one is pleased to see that of Jeremy Bentham.

This piece of financiering and the unexampled success which attended the operations at New Lanark lifted Robert Owen into great prominence,—made him for a time the most talked-of man in Europe. It is probably not too much to say that no industrial enterprise before or since was ever productive of so much good to all concerned in it. The mills prospered abundantly, and the great part of the profits went to the operatives in the wisest of ways, making of them ere long nothing less than a model community. The

fame of the village went abroad, attracting visitors from far and near. The list of them for a few ensuing years includes many eminent economists, statesmen, princes. Even the Czar Nicholas came, and seems to have been the most interested of all, for, if we are to believe his host's biographer, he tried to induce Owen to go over to Russia and develop his system on a far grander scale, offering to put millions at his disposal for the purpose. Skilled labor was to be drawn on from England and Scotland to ensure success, — a part of the plan which looked practicable, for even then, while New Lanark was prosperous, an industrial crisis was coming on and factories were beginning to shut down.

The recurrence of a crisis in the industrial world with all its attendant miseries brought the fact home to Owen how little bearing the reform of one village by placing its factory on a partially co-operative basis had on the general situation. He aspired to remedy universal ills, and for even an attempt at that there must be a widely extended movement. We need not follow him on his communistic crusade, which, begun in 1817, was zealously pushed for twenty-five years, further than to note what deep-seated social unrest was behind the masterful, if mistaken, efforts of this first English socialist to set up in the British isles and in America a new order of things. He thought a few industrial societies on a communistic basis, established here and there, would prove their superiority over the old order so conclusively that the whole

world would shortly be led to follow suit. Thinking that the new societies might best be begun in a new country, he came to the United States in 1825, and, with an eye to great things in the future, purchased 30,000 acres on the Wabash river in the southwest county of Indiana as the seat of his New Harmony community. About the same time a disciple started a community near Glasgow, and later two other experiments were made. But none of these attained anything like the solid success of the New Lanark enterprise which stood on another foundation. The leader's philosophy was inferior to his energy, his theories were not workable, and his efforts to make them work stand now only as sad protests against evils not to be abolished in his way.

#### FURTHER SOCIALISTIC SPECULATIONS AND EFFORTS AT REFORM

The schemes of Saint-Simon and of Owen proving abortive, the former through failure ever to reach the practical stage, the latter from demonstrated impracticability, the fighting center of the class struggle swerved again to the political arena. In 1830 the French people got strength to rise and dethrone a king who was seeking by all that in him lay to undo what was left of the work of the Revolution and restore the *status quo ante*. Upon the fall of Charles X. the aristocracy definitively disappeared as a ruling power in France, giving place to the *bourgeoisie*, or middle class, with the proletariat, or wage-



workers, rising into the opposing, revolutionary party. Modifications of communistic theories and plans of organization already referred to, with original features skilfully worked out, sprang up and had some vogue, fascinating here and there little circles of high-minded people to whom the flagrant injustice and the economic failure of the existing order were obvious. But the speculations of Fourier and Considérant and the dreams of Cabet, while producing some temporary results in America, had little influence in France. There attention was fixed on the new government and the great things it was expected to accomplish. Socially considered, what it really did was to bring the bourgeois to the front; shifting the preponderance of classes, and in the direction of liberalism. Following quickly upon the revolution in France came an uprising in Belgium resulting in independence. Contemporaneous was the celebrated Reform Act in England, changing the basis of the franchise, extending the influence of the middle class, and taking from the landowning aristocracy the direct supremacy in the conduct of affairs which they had before enjoyed. Their further rule was made indirect, conceded only out of ingrained English deference to lords and gentlemen. Great forward stages in mechanical invention also distinguished this period, multiplying and perfecting the instruments of industry and of commerce. It was in 1830 that the first passenger railway-train was propelled by a locomotive, inaugurating that swift and facile movement of people from place

to place which has been so allied with quickened mental movements. The need of better facilities for education was at once felt, and steps were taken to meet it. The abolition of slavery in all the British colonies followed in 1833, and two years later came the reform of municipal corporations.

In the United States the material advances of the time were yet more notable. The chief cities were connected by railroads, the coal deposits of Pennsylvania began to be opened up, the smelting of iron ore rose to great importance, steamboats turned lakes and rivers into highways of commerce. As by the touch of an enchanter's wand, the vast wildernesses to the West were transformed into the homes of teeming millions. The telegraph came, and seemed to complete an age of marvel. Never had civilization had anything like such an expansion. With all this material progress went an intellectual awakening hardly less remarkable. A literary epoch began. Statesmanship of a high order loomed up, masterful orators stood in Congress, on public platforms, and in city pulpits. Popular education was improved and richly endowed in the North and West. Benjamin Lundy and William Lloyd Garrison entered upon their heroic struggle with the slave power which from its seat in the South had acquired a strange dominance over the whole country, — appalling shadow upon an otherwise smiling picture. Only the little band of reformers — indomitable light-bearers — were in line with the world-movement sure at length to sweep all

before it. A less conspicuous but really significant sign of the times was the outbreak of the anti-renters in the State of New York, who rose against the last remnant of feudalism there, and, though checked for a time by military authority, carried their case into the Constitutional Convention of 1846 and won it.

In 1838 there broke out in England a political movement known as "Chartism," from its manifesto, "The People's Charter," led by a few radical members of Parliament and backed by the "Workingmen's Association." The reforms insisted on were: annual parliaments, universal suffrage, vote by ballot, abolition of property qualification for membership in the House of Commons, payment of members, and equal electoral districts. O'Connell lent to the cause the might of his eloquence, holding monster meetings in the great cities, and England for a time was fairly shaken to its center by the propaganda. Though the movement collapsed in 1848, apparently from English dread of revolution, in the throes of which half of Europe then was, the demands of the Chartists have since been considered reasonable, and in a measure they have been granted.

#### LOUIS BLANC AND THE CRISIS OF 1848

The social crisis that came on toward the middle of the century had been foreseen by close observers. There was little doubt, either, where the first rumblings would be heard. Paris was the effervescing center of disturbance from which emanated the spirit

of revolution. Thither from 1840, men of all nations, eager to get light and cast light on the social situation, were making pilgrimage to replenish their lamps, — Lassalle, Marx, Bakunin, and others destined to stand conspicuously before the world. They wanted to know what meant the amazing contradiction, patent to all eyes, of wide-spread, crying want in the midst of abounding plenty. There had been in all civilized lands a period of unwonted prosperity, astonishing development of natural resources, immense increase of production, vast accumulation of wealth; and yet the condition of the great body of the workers had by no means been correspondingly improved. What little ameliorations of their lot were to be seen had been granted with aggravating reluctance and after a struggle disgracefully long. Only gray-headed men could remember when began the philanthropic effort in behalf of little children, women, and men driven day and night in factories and mines, with working hours that had no definite limit short of the complete exhaustion of the workers; and not even yet had anything like justice been wrung from employers grown rich out of these abuses. Still there was not a conscious class war, for neither employers nor employed were banded together. Each person was for himself, his hand against every other man, and every other man's hand against him. Unrestricted competition was working itself out in hideous results, making ravenous beasts of men, even of men naturally disposed to be kind and gentle. Commercial

interests, left to take their own course, — the vaunted rule of *laissez faire*, — had eventuated in a civilization having on one side the aspect of barbarism, presenting the rankest contrasts of riches and poverty that the world had ever seen. Of the actual situation as it came under his own eyes, Louis Blanc wrote:

“Never had society been abandoned to such disorders as now afflicted it under the direction of its official guides. There was an incessant strife of masters for the command of the market, of workmen for the command of employment; of the masters against the workmen for the fixing of wages, of workmen against the machine destined (as they believed) to destroy by superseding them. Such is a summary of the situation, viewed in its industrial aspect, brought about by the system of free competition. What a picture of social disorder! the great capitalists winning out in the strife, as the strong battalions on the field of battle, and the principle of ‘free for all’ leading to results as ruinous as are reached by the most odious monopolies; the great manufacturers and the great merchants driving small establishments to the wall; usury by degrees gaining possession of the soil — a modern feudality more odious than the old; independent artisans giving place to those who are mere serfs; capital engulfing itself with shameless avidity in the most perilous undertakings; all interests armed, one against another. The working classes presented a spectacle utterly pitiful, — the poor helper of a master-workman, in a crisis,

seeking subsistence by beggary or by theft; the displaced workman's father going at sixty years to die in a hospital; his sixteen-year-old daughter prostituting herself for a livelihood; his son doomed to breathe, from seven years of age, the contaminated air of great workshops to add to the meager earnings of the family; the improvidence of misery, and the miserable workers without work, menacing the kingdom with an inundation of beggars! Such was the material condition of society. On the other hand, as to the moral and spiritual condition of the people, no attachment to traditions; the rampant spirit of inquiry denying everything, affirming nothing, and acknowledging no other religion than the love of gain. Human life had no sanctity, human feebleness no claim. Stand opposite the factories and see every morning at five, about the doors and pressing in, a crowd of pale, sickly children with downcast eyes and livid cheeks, walking heavily and stooped like old men. The social system founded on competition is to such a degree cruel and insensate that it not only stifles the intelligence and depraves the disposition of the poor children, it even stunts and withers their physical life."

What a picture of the state of society in France on the eve of the revolution of 1848! Does any one wonder that a time of overturning drew nigh?

In similar language thirty years before, Saint-Simon had spoken of the condition of the toilers. He pitied them with a great-heartedness as rare as it is beauti-

ful, and devised an elaborate scheme for their succor and elevation. But, ignorant and debased as they were, he saw no way in which they could help themselves, could not think of proposing to give them a free hand. They were to be lifted up and guided, he thought, by the generous action in their behalf of the upper and the better instructed class. As these largely professed to be followers of Jesus, this gracious disinterestedness seemed not too much to ask of them. But when with great clearness and force he pointed this out to them as their Christian duty, they made no response whatever. We are not surprised; no response could reasonably be expected of them. Here and there by exception a well-to-do individual will be found ready to forego his own private interests and give his life to some great cause, but classes do not act in that way; it is puerile to expect it of them. Saint-Simon had counted all too much on the possible disinterestedness of the aristocrats. His representation that it was in their power to abolish in great part the misery of the lower half of the world, even if it convinced, did not move them. They felt, if anything, a revulsion against any such proceeding, since it must diminish their distinction as the better fed and clothed, housed and instructed class.

When in 1848 the fall of the bourgeois king of France brought the proletariat momentarily to the front with their needs and their cry for work by which to earn their bread, Louis Blanc, who eight



years before had formulated a plan for the organization of labor under the direction, not of an aristocracy but of the democracy, brought the substance of his scheme forward to be enacted into the law of the land. The conditions of the moment were favorable for a hearing in the degree that they were menacing to the life of the young republic. The Parisian workmen, living on the verge of starvation, were desperate in their demands for measures of relief. They were part of the democracy to which the bill committed the direction of the proposed industrial organization, and as great as was their stake in it was their urgency for it. Under the stress of the situation, and as a concession to an element that must be appeased, a majority of the legislative assembly voted some of the provisions; the government undertook to provide work for the unemployed; established workshops, got the idle busy, hushed the cry for bread; but half-hearted in these measures, resorting to them only to smooth over a crisis, it deliberately mismanaged their execution to bring them into disrepute. The beneficiaries, ignorant and shortsighted, played into the hands of their betrayers, making no effort to put the government shops on a productive, paying basis. In consequence of these wasteful proceedings, taxes rose, and the country districts sent up to the new National Assembly a strongly conservative majority which closed the workshops. Thereupon the workmen to the number of some 50,000 took up arms in a formidable insurrection which was

suppressed only after the most obstinate fighting ever known in the streets of Paris, raging for two days and three nights, and costing the lives, it is said, of more Frenchmen than even the bloodiest of Napoleon's battles.

In justice to Louis Blanc it must be said that this terrible *dénouement* of the French labor troubles of 1848 is nowise chargeable to him. What exactly would have happened if his plan of industrial organization had been fully instituted and faithfully carried out, no one can tell; but that it would have been something wholly different from what did happen, there can be no doubt. It will not do to point to that fearful fight, in reprobation of all departures from the dicta of orthodox political economy. He contemplated something more than providing a living for some 120,000 workmen; he proposed that they should be put to useful labor, that they should become producers instead of consumers only — consumers, too, at the expense of the public; and if the authorities had had the wish and the wisdom to so arrange affairs, something beneficent might have come out of the plan, and the workmen would have had no occasion to rise in revolt. After a fair test the scheme could have been modified as experience might indicate the need, or finally rejected as a demonstrated error.

The *coup d'état* of Louis Napoleon and the measures of repression that followed under the rule of that hypocritical and unscrupulous politician (who had been himself a conspirator and as a professed liberal

posed as the defender of the people) stifled free speech in France, put an end to any open effort for social reform, any systematic development of public schools, and smothered in showy constructions and pretentious international politics all thought of the real elevation of the people. The surviving leaders of reform, driven out of the country, were scattered as seed over the world. Some came to America; others, intent on watching from near by the course of events, betook themselves to Switzerland, to England, and to Germany. In London particularly the banished irrecconcilables from all over the continent gathered, and there demonstrated in the course of the following years more effectively, perhaps, than it had ever been demonstrated before how far mightier in the long run is the pen than the sword.

#### LASSALLE, PRINCE OF AGITATORS

The revolutionary spirit of 1848 had swept widely and shaken other thrones besides that of Louis Philippe. Thwarted politically in Germany, it pursued its course socially, with results which, small as they looked at the time, have turned out to be of the first importance. The man who on the ground brilliantly led the incipient movement, creating an epoch, was Ferdinand Lassalle.

Born in Breslau in 1825, son of a wealthy Jewish merchant, he enjoyed the best of early opportunities, of which he made excellent use. As a student he attracted the attention of the great in the learned

world, getting from the famous Humboldt the sobriquet of *Wunderkind* — Wonderful child. His prospects were of the brightest; all avenues to distinction lay open before him. Nevertheless he joined the revolutionists of 1848, or got mixed up with them; and even after the collapse of their movement in Berlin, being at Düsseldorf, he advised the citizens not to give up the contest. For this he was seized and thrown into jail charged with treason. Himself a trained lawyer, he managed his own case in court, boldly declaring that he was a Social Democrat, and that what he wanted to see was a Socialist Democratic Republic; that as for resisting the State when the State is in the wrong, he held that to be no crime, but the citizen's right and duty. He was acquitted of treason, but, on a charge of resisting arrest, another tribunal sent him to prison for six months. When at the expiration of that period he would return to his friends in Berlin, he found the way blocked by royal decree. After seven years of ineffectual attempts to procure a revocation of this banishment from the place he most loved, he resolved to disregard it; he would return under another name and in some menial occupation rather than live in luxury elsewhere. So one day in 1857 he appeared in the capital attired as a cartman, somewhat to the dismay of his friends. The king, however, seems to have thought it rather amusing, and on the intercession of an influential friend suffered the audacious democrat to remain.

A cold reaction from revolutionary days was on, and Lassalle accommodated himself to it; plunged into literary activity, producing numerous philosophical pamphlets, satires, essays on current politics,—uncertainly biding his hour. Years passed in this way, until it began to seem that this “lion of the tribe of Judah” was really tamed. Then it happened that he was called on to deliver a lecture to the Working-men’s Society in Berlin on “The Connection between the Present Epoch of History and the Idea of the Working Class.” This subject led him out again upon dangerous ground, and he treated it with such boldness that there followed another prosecution by the government, and another term of imprisonment. These events brought him prominently into view as the champion of the proletariat, and on his release from prison led to his being invited to address a General Working-men’s Congress at Leipzig in February, 1863. The address which was sent, and which took the form of a letter, sketched a political programme for the working class; and this was the beginning of the Social Democratic movement in Germany.

At that time considerable effort was being made to better the condition of the German workers and soothe the rising agitation among them by organizing co-operative associations in various branches of production. The leader of this movement, a man of means and generous impulses, and a few others, were doing what they could to erect the buildings required

and to procure the necessary implements; but as the workers forming the associations had nothing, adequate funds were constantly lacking, and results were generally unsatisfactory. Lassalle set himself firmly against the plan, pointing out that it must inevitably fail, since the co-operative establishments, poorly equipped from lack of means, must come into competition with great concerns furnished with the very best facilities for production. This disadvantage must first of all be disposed of; help must come from some more efficient source; it must come from the State. And to bring this about there must be a great political agitation; the working-men and their friends must form themselves into a party and fight as best they can for universal suffrage. That obtained, all they will have to do is to speak with one voice, and every reasonable demand will be granted by the government. The first crying need of the people is relief from the iron and cruel wage-system by which capital is taking to itself an ever-increasing share of the results of production. He contended that the only real relief from this monstrous wrong must come through co-operative production, associated labor in the place of hired labor; which, to be fairly established and given an even chance of success, must be introduced by State help and on State credit. The State grants subsidies to start railways, to encourage steamship lines, to develop agriculture, to promote manufactures; where then is the harm if the State do a similar service to the great working class, who

are in fact not a class but almost the State itself, being more than nine-tenths of the whole population, and much more deserving of an uplift, a bonus, than any railway or steamship line. Being themselves practically the State, there is no beggary in their calling on the State for assistance. State help in such a case would be self-help. He concluded his letter with an appeal to all laborers to work tooth and nail for universal suffrage, for they must have the right to vote before they could exert any direct influence on the government. For them universal suffrage was a question of subsistence, appealing directly to the stomach.

Strong an utterance as this was, there was at the time little response. The Leipzig committee to which it was addressed approved, as did here and there an advanced thinker about the country; but the press generally denounced it, and, strange to say, the working-men too. In Leipzig alone they were with him; and so overwhelmingly that when, a little later, he went there to address them and get their expression, only seven out of an audience of thirteen hundred voted against him. Thus encouraged, he set out upon a regular propaganda. In May, 1863, he founded the General Working-men's Association, whose avowed object was the promotion of universal suffrage by peaceful agitation. He was himself the soul of the organization, and pushed it with a determination and a tireless energy all his own. He traveled the country over, speaking wherever an audience could be



assembled, trying to organize branch associations; he wrote and published much, circulating also with a free hand the writings of other socialist leaders. It took endless repetition to get the new ideas into the heads of the slow German laborers, but once a thought was lodged, it took root and spread. As commonly happens in work for so general a principle, it was found necessary to tolerate all manner of disagreement in secondary matters for the sake of unity on the main purpose. Vagaries of the wildest description cropped out everywhere to try the patience of a broadly educated, clear-headed leader, but he bore with them, demanding agreement only on one thing — the necessity of universal suffrage. That gained, he trusted time and reflection to take care of the rest.

For even the first step in this enterprise there was needed a strong organization, strong at least in numbers. Lassalle thought that with the support of one hundred thousand voices his request for so just a concession to the working-men might get the ear of the government. But this preliminary organization proved a very difficult undertaking. With all the labor he put upon it and all he could get others to put upon it, it went discouragingly slow. After three months of unremitting solicitation only one thousand members were obtained, — provoking his reproachful outcry: "When will this foolish people cast aside their lethargy?" But he would not be turned from his purpose by the aggravating indifference of those he sought to serve; the harder the task the more

energetically he would lay hold of it. Still the visible results continued meager; after a year of further work his Association and its branches counted only 4610 members, and Lassalle himself began to fear that nothing effective would come of his plan. But his influence had gone deeper than the figures indicate. Many other thousands, while standing aloof, had been moved by the socialist lecturer, had seen the generous ardor of his soul, felt the force of his reasoning and the winsome charm of his speech; and to these, though to the living teacher they did not commit themselves, the shock of his tragic and untimely death came as a decisive, irresistible call to declare their adhesion, and the Social Democracy, as we shall later see, rose apace.

#### KARL MARX

The fires of social discontent through all the eventful mid-years of the nineteenth century were fanned by that greatest of agitators and thinkers on these lines, Karl Marx. German by birth, at twenty-four years of age he was editor of a radical journal at Cologne, the suppression of which in 1843 led him to remove to Paris. There he continued his German newspaper under another name until expelled from France in 1845. Going then to Brussels, he was driven in turn from Belgium. Returning to Cologne, he commenced there the publication of another journal, which soon brought him under the condemnation of the government, and he was obliged definitely to leave his native

land. Thus banished from every part of the continent where he had sought domicil, he went over to England and established himself in London in 1850, where till his death in 1883 he continued his work undisturbed. Under his leadership socialism assumed an international character which greatly extended its influence. A veritable fellowship among the workers of all lands was instituted, giving new depth and vigor to the movement as well as a world-wide sweep, lending to previously isolated holders and defenders of the new ideas a much needed encouragement and support. A powerful organization was formed—The International—which held its meetings where it could, and became the besetting terror of absolutism in government.

Linking the peoples together, socialism naturally makes for peace among the nations. But in 1870 it had not become enough of a power to prevent a needless and wicked war. The poor workers, who have nothing to do with making war, but bear the brunt of it when it is made, rallied on both sides, fought and bled and died, as their class has ever done, for the phantom going by the name of glory. The world looked on with admiration of the victors, or sympathy for the vanquished, with little disapproval of those whose machinations brought on the conflict. But when at the end the working-men of Paris rose in assertion of what they held to be their own rights, and fought for a principle, for autonomy in city government, as London, or New York, or Chicago would

do if dominated by the State as Paris was, the world stood aghast, horrified at the spectacle. And when the Commune was crushed under such monstrous atrocities as it had never dreamed of perpetrating, such in fact as had rarely, if ever, disgraced modern civilization, the same world looked on complacently. The number of working-men slaughtered was far greater than in 1848, and the slaughter was greatly more inhuman, as it included thousands of the captured. As many more were deported to die in malarious regions.

THE UNREST PROVOKED BY MORE RECENT  
CONDITIONS

The uprising of the Commune of Paris, though not distinctively a socialist movement (the socialists in it were a small minority), was attended with such destruction, such horrors—obscuring the equal, even greater horrors of its suppression—as to discredit for a time all efforts to bring the working-men forward into the control of affairs, and gave the socialist propaganda a serious set-back. This, however, was only temporary. The unprecedented increase of wealth, becoming more and more astonishing, and the corresponding augmentation of the evils of capitalism, arouse in reflecting minds of the present generation a feeling of profound and well-nigh universal discontent. That the bulk of this newly created wealth falls into the hands of a comparatively few persons, while the great mass of the workers out of whose

toil it comes live from hand to mouth, is a fact which to the latter and to all lovers of social justice cannot but be the more exasperating the more it is considered. In the United States, where of late riches have most rapidly multiplied, more than half the wealth is now reported to be in the hands of one per cent. of the population; creating an aristocracy most menacing to democratic institutions. When these people reach over the heads of the rest of us and direct the making and the administration of law, as they are beginning to do, what will it avail to call this a republic and ours a republican form of government? In the general eagerness to get hold of dollars men are found to let go of all higher considerations; and if at the polls numbers continue to count for something, with legislatures the one per cent. who hold the great fortunes often count for more, and manage with alarming frequency to bear down the expressed wish of the people. The merging of corporations and the general swallowing up of minor business interests are fast bringing the capital of the country where it can act unitedly in any emergency, and where, acting with the sagacity and freedom from moral restraint which inhere in it, it will inevitably be, if present tendencies go on, the "power behind the throne."

In the meantime the multitude, possessors of little or nothing, are in a state of bewilderment and deep dissatisfaction. The better wages paid in America, the unavoidable participation of the great part of the people in the advantages of a rapidly developing

country, have contributed thus far to bring a considerable measure of comfort to some of them; but one has only to go into the large cities or into the great manufacturing centers to find that there are thousands upon tens of thousands of whose lot no such pleasant thing is to be said. Corporations rolling in wealth witness (if things which proverbially have no souls may be supposed to have eyes) without compunction the squalor in which live the operatives out of whose toil others are made rich — witness it, and complacently go on declaring generous dividends. Under such circumstances community of interest between employers and employed cannot exist; on the contrary, incessant antagonism arises, breaking ever and anon into open war.

Strike follows strike on both sides of the sea, recurring quite as frequently in our country where wages are highest as elsewhere, indicating that the provoking cause lies deeper than in the inadequacy of wages paid, — lies in the wage-system itself, which does not directly relate the reward of labor to the value of the product of that labor.

As yet we have not in this country given so much attention to social questions as have the people of some of the European countries. These questions have been less pressing here, partly because life in America has been generally easier for the poor. Population being less crowded, opportunities for employment have been better; a great work of development has called loudly for labor; food has often

been cheaper, making subsistence less precarious. But we are behind in this matter chiefly for another and very different reason. At the very time when Lassalle in Germany and Marx from his covert in England were laying down the principles of the great social reconstruction and waking Europe to the strife for new social ideals, we were absorbed with the belated slavery question, elsewhere long before disposed of by enlightened nations. It was a social question, a social evil, we had to deal with; but we dealt with it politically, and with weapons of war. So it came about that though slavery was in form abolished, the social question involved in it remained unsettled,—remained under the new conditions even more acute and more disturbing than ever. The artificial juxtaposition of races so distinct—instituted to meet the exigencies of a state of society so different from that which has supervened, a daily, hourly contact, become repugnant but not possibly to be avoided—turns into a source of the gravest difficulties, and is calculated to render the administration of political and social justice on the boasted American principle of equal rights, even where attempted, a failure if not a mockery.

While in the progressive countries of Europe millions are awake and astir for a better social order, in many quarters all good citizens combining efficiently for purity in municipal government, establishing municipal ownership of public utilities, introducing new



and revolutionary fiscal ideas; incorporating, in short, in law and custom many of the principles of socialism,— we have to confess a shameful backwardness along some of these lines. We are not as inquiet under existing conditions as we ought to be. We are too generally indifferent where we have reason to be profoundly concerned; too free from that troublesome but saving Unrest which is the generator of progress, the *vis medicatrix naturæ* for social ills.

But there are indications in this present time that public sentiment is at a turning point with us. Every now and then a voice is heard from an unexpected quarter, chiming in with voices more familiar, calling upon a people so great in spite of their faults, and having such unrivaled opportunities for greatness yet unattained, to get uneasy at the spectacle of municipal corruption, of graft and criminal greed, almost daily brought to light, and to consider from what is exposed what must be the unmeasured extent and what the baseness deep and damning of that which remains under cover. It is beginning to be more commonly seen and said that Mammon-worship is threatening the destruction of a people whose start among the nations, whose geographical situation, the productivity of whose soil, the extent of whose territory, and the imperishable glory of certain of whose heroes, should go far to make the happiest and best in the world. Let us hope the warning will be heeded in time!

## CHAPTER II

### AN UNCONSCIOUS SOCIALISM MAKING ITS WAY IN LAW AND CUSTOM

The two fundamental purposes of socialism are: collective ownership of the instruments of production—land, factories, utensils, machinery,—lifting labor out of bondage to capital; and the abolition, or great restriction of, inheritance, so that every person may (except in so far as natural endowments differ) have approximately an equal chance in the world. These objects appear, to those who have candidly considered them, so eminently desirable, so imperatively demanded by simple fairness and decency, and—in view of the fact that the ones to be benefited are an overwhelming majority—so attainable withal, at least in a democracy, as to have encouraged the expectation that they are to be speedily realized. Brilliant writers have ventured to indicate quite definitely the period within which we might look for the fulfilment of our hopes, the coming of the social revolution. These calculations impress us, after having lived past one and another of the dates set without seeing anything of the kind taking place, much as do the determinations certain lugubrious people are always making of the last day and the end of the world. At present socialists generally are coming to doubt that the substitution of a new

social order for the old is to be brought about by a sudden overturning; to think rather that the end is to be reached by the gradual processes of evolution now going on under their eyes, — processes whose beginning is hidden in a far distant past, which have been accelerated in our day, but not so as to bring the consummation within sight.

If this is the method on which the social order is to be changed, the history of the changes that have already taken place, could it be laid before us, would be of the greatest value. From the direction and tendency of past modifications, especially those of recent date, we might be able reasonably to infer something as to what is to follow, might find ground to strengthen our hopes on long lines, however it might fare with our enthusiasms touching immediate results. Such a history is beyond the limits of this work, and we must content ourselves with a hurried glance over a most interesting field.

#### PRIMITIVE COMMUNISM

Whatever has been done at any time by any people, or by their representatives, directly for the public benefit or for the relief of a dependent class, is in its nature socialistic. Never a highway constructed, or a path, for whatever human feet may need to take it, blazed through a forest, but is to be so characterized. Public improvements, that is, improvements made for the general good and for no ulterior private or political end, are socialistic improvements. The

church, and the cathedrals which are its monuments, so far as they serve the whole people, and at any rate as regards those they do serve, have a socialistic quality; as do all brotherhoods and their temples where men meet on equal terms and pledge themselves to mutual services. The same is to be said of schools, from the first of them that ever was established. The family, where all are lodged in one house, eat at one table, draw upon a common store, material and spiritual, to which they severally contribute, is the very prototype of the communistic social order, — unless we prefer to give that distinction to the tribe in the early stages of its development. For the tribe in those stages was distinctly communistic. Not only was the territory occupied — principally serving for hunting and fishing — a common possession for all members of the tribe; it could not by any sale be alienated from them to cut them off from its use for those purposes, as the early settlers of Pennsylvania found. The rudest savages lived in huts which were only nominally private property, belonging about equally to all other members of the tribe. The more developed tribes built them communal habitations of considerable size, capable often of sheltering several hundred persons. In some of the islands of the South Pacific, La Perouse came upon tribal houses three hundred and ten feet long by thirty feet in width and twenty feet high, having the appearance of an inverted boat. An entrance at each end opened into a passage-way, on

either side of which were the lodgings of the community. In the Carolines these constructions were found of dimensions to house as many as seven hundred. The "long houses" of the Iroquois described by Morgan were of similar form and belonged to the whole community of occupants. Similarly, though in more grandiose fashion, lived the cliff-dwellers of Mexico. All around the world the settlements of these various peoples antedating civilization had their provisions in common, lived, cooked, and ate as a single family. Lafargue cites\* from Heraclites, a Greek writer of the fourth century B. C., a description of people then living on the island of Crete where archaic customs persisted remarkably, going to show that they had at that time a well elaborated communism. It seems to have been the universal form of society among primitive peoples, from whom a few tribes have brought it down to our time. If to the wild man anything approaches the nature of private property, it is naturally what he gets possession of by his own personal effort, his fish and game; but we are told by observers on the ground that even these things he does not regard as his own to the exclusion of other members of the gens; he scrupulously puts his catch at the disposal of the whole community.

Only the strongest races and races most favorably located were able without grave disaster to renounce

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\* *La Propriété*, p. 327.

the obvious and great advantages coming from possession in common of whatever good the earth has to offer. As it is, even in countries where soil and climate are of the best, we are in a measure aware how close to starvation and extinction the workers at times have come under the system which sets every man grasping for what there is in sight, even to the food that feeds his neighbor's children. In regions greatly less favorable for maintaining an existence we find the primitive communism holding on because it could not be renounced without entailing the destruction of the tribe. The Esquimaux are a case in point. Commander Peary, who has lived among them and studied them intimately these eighteen years, says: "I hope no efforts will ever be made to civilize them. Such efforts, if successful, would destroy their primitive communism, which is necessary to preserve their existence. Once give them an idea of real-estate interest and personal-property rights in houses and food, and they would become as selfish as civilized beings; whereas now any game larger than a seal is the common property of the tribe, and no man starves while his neighbors are gorging themselves. If a man has two sets of hunting implements, he gives one of them to the man who has none. It is this feeling of good fellowship which alone preserves the race." \*

Citation of facts of this kind is not made to support

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\* *Hampton's Magazine* for February, 1910, p. 173.

Rousseau's theory of the superiority of the savage state over the civilized, but to show that collective possession of the earth and of its productions is the basis of social existence to which man naturally comes.

#### ORIGIN OF PRIVATE PROPERTY

In course of time, however, the more hardy, best located tribes developed the idea of private property, first in things movable, things the holder had himself made or found, things useful in the chase, in building a house, in preparing food, things comfortable to wear, or ornamental to the person. The first houses constructed separately for single families were slight affairs, easily movable, and so passed readily enough into the new category of private property; and, later on, with the house went the ground on which it stood, together with a surrounding patch of land rudely cultivated, which in time came to be inclosed by a stockade or a rough wall of stone. The transition to all this, we may be sure, was slow, especially the last step of it, changing the tenure of land; for, while the notion of private ownership in what one has produced with one's own hands was a simple inference easy to arrive at, it was most difficult for early man to conceive how exclusive title could lie in land any more than in water or air. It came to him hard, and it was accepted reluctantly, only after thousands of years. The Russian peasant has not accepted it yet.



In the earlier stage when there were no distinctions of rich and poor, men won their rank by their prowess, their endurance, their might of limb, their gifts of speech and of leadership,—gifts of superiority nowhere definitely transmissible from father to son, least of all in a rude society given to promiscuity in all relations; consequently the great at their death surrendered their greatness to the tribe instead of passing it down through a line of successors. There was no way, under such circumstances, in which a dominating class could be built up. As soon, however, as private property came to be recognized and began to accumulate, distinction of classes began to show itself, not prominently at first or for a long time, for the first great inequalities of wealth must have been very slow in appearing; but little by little, through violent appropriation of what belonged to others, the chiefs and their favorites came to be distinguished for their possessions, ordinarily more than for anything else, and were able to transmit this distinction to their children. The chief became a king; an hereditary nobility grew up along with an hereditary monarchy.

#### FEUDALISM

This was the beginning of what is known as feudalism. We find it in full swing in Europe in the middle ages, by which time the barons, and the king, who was chief among them, had taken possession of all the land not already in the hands of the church,

and of whatever else seemed to them desirable. Speaking of England at the close of the tenth century, Ramsay says: "Everything belongs either to the king or the lord. Thus in England the national peace is now the king's peace; the State domain—the folk-land—is *terra regis*. The township has become the lord's manor, the township waste the lord's waste, the township court the lord's court." And, quoting Stubbs: "Land has become the sacramental tie of all public relations; the poor man depends on the rich, not as his chosen patron, but as the owner of the land he cultivates, the lord of the court to which he does suit and service, the leader whom he is bound to follow to the host." It was an enormous distinction that existed between this nobility and their underlings, of which the very structures speak in which these quasi-monarchs passed their days. More or less in ruins, but massive and majestic still, they are every one a fortress built to withstand a siege, perched often on a well-nigh inaccessible height, frowning on all the region around. For these lords distrusted one another as do modern nations, and like them stood in instant readiness for a mortal combat. The common herd on whom fell the drudgery in time of peace, in time of war did the fighting, the bleeding and dying, proud of the glory of their overlords, well content to be the soldiers and serfs of such mighty men. They cultivated for their own maintenance each a little glebe allotted them by the great landlord; in return for which and for his

powerful protection, they devoted themselves for a prescribed part of the year, without further compensation, to the work of carrying on his extensive agricultural and other operations, and gave him also unrestricted military service as occasion might require. It was a condition only a step above slavery, but having this one advantage: it made the toiler's security from starvation depend on his own diligence in the cultivation of the ground allotted for his exclusive use. This, while it did not lessen, but tended rather to increase the severity of his toil as compared with that of the slave, did give a moiety of independence, and, for that major part of the time that he was his own master, a basis for self-respect. He need not starve, as in a crisis one who depends on wages may.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE BOURGEOISIE

Between these extremes of feudal society were the artisans, the tradesmen, the professional people, forming a middle class which enjoyed a few privileges denied the humbler sort. As time went on, as manufacture and commerce slowly developed, this middle class increased in numbers, acquired wealth, came to wield an influence. The feudal lords felt a new and portentous breath moving upon the dead waters of mediævalism, and began to lose their grip on the world; and when, in the latter half of the eighteenth century, the great epoch of steam-power and labor-saving machinery came, bringing upon the scene

manufacturing and merchant princes rivaling them in wealth and leaving them out of sight behind in enterprise, the days of feudalism were numbered. The old order went down, but not without a struggle, for it was entrenched in custom and had behind it the arm of civil authority. Here and there the change was inaugurated by a bloody revolution; but everywhere it came, whether by sudden, violent outbreaks or peacefully by slow degrees, and the epoch of industrial capitalism, which still continues, was ushered in. Before the middle of the nineteenth century the middle class was everywhere politically in the ascendant. They transformed absolutism in all civilized countries into constitutional government. As some of them grew vastly rich, they assimilated by affinity all that was left of the old order, and created themselves—or within themselves—a new aristocracy; so ceasing to be a middle, and becoming the upper class, with only the proletariat and friends of the proletariat in opposition. The social outcome of it all was, a new form of oppression, so certain is it that whoever gets on top will play the tyrant.

#### EFFECT OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The revolution of the world's system of industry brought about in the last years of the eighteenth century by the substitution of machine for hand work, of great factories for simple domestic production in multitudinous scattered homes, had the effect not only to leave many without work, but to crowd the

rest into great centers of industry where they exchanged the independence of manufacturers producing their own wares with their own implements in their own houses, for the dependence of people with absolutely nothing of their own, asking to work under conditions which enabled the employer to stipulate not only the wages to be paid but the hours to constitute a day's labor, with the natural result that wages went to a minimum and the hours to a maximum. Inevitably, with the Manchester doctrine of *laissez faire* in undisturbed operation, the factories became houses of torture, where men and women and little children were worked on the least possible wage and for all there was in them. When Shaftesbury in the House of Commons set out to correct these abuses by statute he was stoutly opposed by no less noble men than John Bright and Richard Cobden. At that time Cobden's annual income from his factory is said to have been between \$40,000 and \$50,000, and yet he was unwilling that night work of children nine years of age should be prohibited, or that the working day of children should be reduced to twelve hours. What shall be said of a system that leads good men to act in that way—that in England yielded to humane factory legislation only after some fifty years of struggle? But we have to note, as a socialistic idea working its way into law, that measures were finally carried that have remedied an outrageous situation, though not bringing the working day in factories

down to the reasonable length of eight hours. However, the socialistic idea involved in the action lies, not so much in the measure of relief afforded, as in the assertion of the principle that it is the business of a government to look after the interests of the people, especially of the poor and the defenseless, and not permit a vicious economic system to grind the lives out of them.

#### STATE SUPERVISION OF INDUSTRIES

The capitalist theory stoutly adhered to through that great crisis of industry was, that there should be no State interference with business enterprises, no regulation by State authority. In a free country, it was said, every man must be permitted to run his own business. But once the hideous results of such a theory, applied to work in factories and mines, was brought to light through official invasion of those sacred precincts, the way was open for State supervision of many other industries. Disregarding the dicta of certain economists and the loud protests of capitalists, the State, from that time, has been reaching its interfering hand out farther and farther, until now in almost every country it has under inspection and control practically all industrial operations, with a tendency to take more and more of them completely over into its own management. Twenty odd years ago Mr. Sidney Webb enumerated fifty-four lines of activity which were registered, and for the most part inspected, criticized, and regulated, by the

English government, adding this list of enterprises brought under more rigid control: railways, tramways, ships, mines, factories, canal-boats, public conveyances, fisheries, slaughter-houses, dairies, milk-shops, bakeries, baby-farms, gas-meters, schools of anatomy, vivisection laboratories, explosive works, Scotch herrings, and common lodging-houses; and unmistakably to this day in his country the supervision becomes ever more all-embracing. If something less in the way of State interference and supervision is to be seen in our own country, there is a marked tendency in the same direction which cannot long leave us much behind. Every year adds to the statutes based on the socialistic principle that the welfare of the people is the supreme aim of law; that to the attainment of this end all private, individual interests must be made to bend,—statutes designating the hours and the occupations in which children may be employed, making cruel treatment a misdemeanor; statutes to insure purity of food offered for sale, to put restrictions on the vending of dubious nostrums; statutes regulating or prohibiting the traffic in intoxicants; statutes to curb the power of trusts, to stay the greed of railroad companies and other carriers,—and much other legislation of a wholly new order, designed to protect the public from the wiles of the powerful and the unscrupulous. In France and Germany and the smaller States of the North of Europe, legislation of this kind has gone even much further, trenching more decidedly on the



old fancy that one has the right to do what one will with one's own; the assumption seeming to be that what one possesses is not exclusively one's own; that it is so far common property as to give to the community a voice, at some points even a controlling voice, in the management of it. Houses must be kept in sanitary condition and in good repair, lawns reasonably free from weeds and properly dressed, forests even scientifically cared for, all highways made fit alike for princes and for people, as perfect in point of utility and as fair to the eye as may be. Unsightly quarters of cities are unceremoniously wiped out as with a sponge by municipal authority, and structures satisfactory to the communal taste ordered up. One cannot pass through these lands without getting a sense that, whoever may hold the title-deeds, an imperial power, known as the Will of the People, intervenes and compels the administration of property with some view to the common good.

#### CONDUCT OF INDUSTRIES BY THE STATE

From State regulation of industries it is an easy step, one would say, to the conduct of industries by the State; and yet this latter was nowhere undertaken without misgivings, the ingrained notion being that any such proceeding is hazardous, sure to be wasteful and costly; that a corporation of any sort, national or other, is by its very nature unfitted in general for the conduct of affairs. The older economists were disposed to think banking and insur-

ance the only lines of business that could be carried on by joint-stock companies; but now these corporations are doing every imaginable kind of business, and fast making obsolete the personal management of investments by the investors themselves. This course of things alone is enough to unsettle confidence in the dictum that industrial enterprises generally cannot be successfully carried on by the State. The greater includes the less, and the greatest corporation of all can, presumably, do whatever the inferior corporations are doing. And this is not a merely theoretical inference. The State has long been showing ability to do other things besides making and enforcing laws, insuring domestic tranquillity, carrying on wars, going through the routine of civil administration. For instance, it established and conducts great systems of public education, in which line of work America long since demonstrated the superiority of State management over any other tried or conceivable method of procedure. In our admirable free-school system, which in the more advanced States includes kindergarten and university, with books and all equipment, we have a set of perfectly socialistic institutions established and working with eminent success, the pride and chief glory of the nation. Time was, and that too quite within the memory of some of us, when in the back districts there was grumbling on the part of some of the childless rich that they were taxed to help educate the children of the poor,—a socialistic proceeding

which Herbert Spencer was among the last to frown upon, — but which now even the rudest have come to approve, the newest States making the amplest provision for free public schools.

The post-office is another example of a public service, immensely important and of vast dimensions, carried on in all countries by the State, and in a more satisfactory manner than it could otherwise be done. In our country it is one of the largest businesses, probably the largest, measured by the number of persons employed, which must now be not far from 220,000.\* The efficiency and precision of the system in all of its many ramifications are matters of astonishment when account is taken of the number of pieces of mail handled and the extent of territory covered. Done at cost, even far below cost, the work is clearly socialistic, as indeed it was before ever the word "socialism" was coined.† With so striking an illustration of the advantages of State management at hand, the wonder is that telegraph and telephone lines and railway systems have not been taken over, as has so largely been done in other countries.

#### EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY

The granting of pensions to soldiers who have served in war is now the general practice of nations,

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\* The official report for 1906 made it 205,258.

† In 1835, says Kirkup.

carried by the United States government to a high degree of liberality. Time was, and that not so very long since, when working-men — the class that make up the bulk of all armies — returning disabled from wars, had no recourse but to go to the poor-house or beg on the street; a fact which made it worse to survive than to die on the field. The outrageousness of this spectacle was one of the things that impelled Sir Thomas More to write his *Utopia*, his gentle soul the while taking refuge in an imaginary world from the sight of abominations confronting him in the real world. In our better day, thanks to a wide though mostly unconscious infusion of socialistic ideas in law and custom, governments frankly assume that the nation at large is justly chargeable with the injuries incurred by its citizens in military service; and while in very many cases the injuries received are beyond what money can make good, the policy, at least in this country, is to err on the side rather of lavishness than of meanness.

This open assumption by the people of liability for physical impairment resulting to men in the public service, carried with it irresistibly the liability of all other employers; and now in civilized countries generally this principle, so obviously just that it has always been in some measure acted on voluntarily by the more conscientious employers of labor, is made legally enforceable. Nothing was ever done or attempted more manifestly socialistic. Hence Employers' Liability Acts have been and are being

opposed vehemently by the powerful class whose responsibilities they materially increase. The most ridiculously absurd objections have been raised: that workmen would intentionally maim themselves in order to become a charge to their employers; that this self-mutilation would go on to such an extent as seriously to impair the industries, crippling the workmen bodily and the employers financially! But nothing stays this movement for social justice; it goes everywhere forward. Even Spain now has its Employers' Liability law.

#### THE STATE SOCIALISM OF BISMARCK

A most remarkable illustration of the power of socialist principles to sway the mind of even an inveterate antagonist of the party, is afforded by the later political career of Prince Bismarck. The "Iron Chancellor" was by instinct and training an autocrat; had a horror of having the people take a free hand in the government of the State, and any good thing in which they led was to him bad. The good things, to be good, must be inaugurated by the head of the State and carried out by him. The people proposing the same things were guilty of a misdemeanor, or even a crime. In 1887 two attempts on the life of the aged emperor, falsely said to have been instigated by inflammatory utterances of socialist speakers, afforded, as he thought, the opportune moment for an effort despotically and by violent measures to suppress the Social Democratic party. Accordingly

he had a law passed prohibiting any speaking or writing in favor of any plan for disturbing the existing social order; he had the government empowered to proclaim a state of siege in large towns, and to expel from them by mere police order any and all suspected of socialist agitation. These laws were enforced with extreme rigor; Berlin and many other cities were declared in state of siege, socialist literature was put out of circulation, — could not be read even in public libraries; Lassalle and his associates were thrown into prison. For twelve years socialism was propagated in Germany only through secret channels and by stealth. However, it was not much hurt, — helped, perhaps, in the end, rather than hindered.

Bismarck, who all the time was not averse to socialistic ideas provided they were brought forward and applied from above and not from below, turned finally to the plan of forestalling the socialists by himself introducing measures looking their way. He would create a large fund to be used for the relief of poor working-men. To do this he had the government establish the tobacco monopoly, declaring that in this he would found "a patrimony for the disinherited," whose distress and discontent he (with the socialists) thought arose from the unrestricted influence of capital. The State owed them some counterbalancing aid. In this position he fortified himself with two extracts from the Code of Frederick the Great, in which that monarch, without being sus-

pected of fanaticism, anticipated by some sixty years the conceptions of Louis Blanc:—

“It is the duty of the State to provide for the sustenance of those of its citizens who cannot procure sustenance themselves.”

“Work adapted to their strength and capabilities shall be supplied to those who lack means and opportunity of earning a livelihood for themselves and those dependent on them.”

Without going so far, he did undertake something considerable in this direction, and, what is most remarkable, with the general applause of the old parties. Laws were introduced providing State insurance of working-men's lives, old-age pensions for the needy arriving at seventy years, and imposing liability for accidents on the employers of labor. Bismarck also pushed vigorously State ownership of railroads, hardly a line in Prussia escaping his grasp, with results highly advantageous to the public,—lower fares, better management, more through trains, more satisfactory connections. Only those travelers—mostly rich Americans—withhold praise who want always to ride in state, and who compare unfavorably the accommodations offered on ordinary trains in Germany with the luxurious refinements of our “palace cars.” The people of the country, however, appreciate the lighter charge, and also the absence of splendors in which they can have no part.

It was a signal tribute to the principles of the Social Democracy that so many of them should have



been accepted and applied by this inveterate foe of the party as to have won him the title of the great State Socialist.

However, in measuring the power of Bismarck in this matter it needs to be borne in mind that the German people had always accepted with a good grace the interference of the government in industrial affairs. The State had long been a great land-owner, in some parts of the country the income derived from its farms and forests sufficing to meet half, or even more than half, the public expenditures. It holds also valuable mines which it works; has built foundries, breweries, potteries; and these, with the railroads and other public services, make the State in Germany the great employer of labor. And the State is not parting with any of these properties; the Crown lands it is adding to, half conscious that the land rightfully belongs to the whole people, and so by construction to the government. Bismarck was no more socialistic than the German situation and German sentiment compelled him to be, and later developments lead us to think he might have been upheld had he gone very much further in that direction.

#### SOCIALISTIC ADVANCES IN VARIOUS EUROPEAN LANDS

But the really great step unconsciously taken in that country toward socialism lies in the splendid provision early made for education. While yet the other principal countries of Europe were disgrace-

fully backward in this matter, Germany had thoroughly systematized and well endowed public instruction; had made the first stages of mental training obligatory, and put a liberal education within the reach of the poorest. Denmark took the same attitude, and Holland was not far behind. In these now intellectually foremost countries the policy, determined and pronounced, has been to assure to the very humblest at the expense of the State some measure of the best things in the world.

In Belgium, where socialism has reached its best development, the department of agriculture long since commenced taking over the distribution of milk in cities, the need of a more thorough inspection and sterilization than could otherwise be reached making the step imperative. It has resulted beyond a question in saving the lives of thousands of children. Railways, telegraph and telephone lines, have been built or purchased by the State until it has now a practical monopoly, — a procedure which has proved highly advantageous both to the Belgian public and to the State treasury.

In Switzerland the State has expropriated the distilleries, and purchased at great cost the railways; at the same time reorganizing the much extended civil service in such a manner as to disconnect it from politics, so that the fall of a party produces no disturbance in State industries. The government of men and the administration of things are so separated as not to interfere with each other. No intel-

ligent traveler in that country can have failed to admire the working of the system, thoroughly democratic, and, as far as it goes, socialistic.

In Sweden and Norway the manufacture and sale of liquors were long since taken under rigorous State control, with results in the lessening of drunkenness eminently gratifying. The complete socialization of production and trade made it possible for the reformers to hit upon the happy idea of depriving the vendor of intoxicants of all interest in swelling his sales, turning him in fact into a practical advocate of temperance, and holding him, by the strongest of bonds under the capitalistic order of things (the money he can make), fast to that rôle,—an idea which, avoiding any shadow of fanaticism, strikes straight at the taproot of the drink evil—personal profit in the sale of the drink—fed and stimulated inordinately by licensing, and in direct proportion to the “height” of license.

France, since the disastrous war of 1870, has taken up in all earnestness the work of public education, before largely left to the church, and consequently largely a failure. The State now endeavors to place within the reach of all its children the best of opportunities, having come round to the socialistic idea that it has in them the greatest stake and for them the greatest responsibility. To meet the expenses of this enlightened and enlightening undertaking, and to provide the funds for pensioning the aged needy (without trenching upon the building of war-ships, which

no nation seems ready to renounce), the government increases the tax upon large incomes and upon inheritance, provoking denunciation from all the old-school economists. Speaking of this movement which came to a head at the same time in France and in England where it brought on a crisis, Leroy-Beaulieu terms it reproachfully, "The Fiscal Revolution,"\* while plaintively admitting that the die is cast beyond recovery. It is the work of socialist wolves in the sheep's clothing of moderate men.

During the same period, thanks to the liberty of speech and of assembly accorded by the Republic, there has been a notable development of workingmen's associations, which, as they become welded together, exercise by the very force of numbers a considerable measure of power, and have been able materially to improve the condition of the working-

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\* See his article under this title in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* for Dec. 1, 1909. "This fiscal Revolution which is about to mark its full accomplishment simultaneously in France and in England has disclosed itself under its brutal aspect only within the last three years." Citing then an English act of 1894 and a French one of 1901, both touching inheritance, as having been the beginnings of trouble, he continues: "These breaches of the principle of the equality of citizens before the law in respect of imposts singularly shook the financial régime which the legislators of the end of the eighteenth and of all the nineteenth century had with so much care and with so great success elaborated." A voice as from the tombs—in how literal a sense they only can know who have heard this master of a great science in its dismal interpretation discourse from the professor's chair.

man, increasing his self-respect, enforcing on employers the payment of better wages. There is in fact no country where social conditions are so well advanced, where socialist principles are so much in evidence, to so marked a degree incorporated in law and custom.

If in England the movement has been slower, it has been less spasmodic, more patiently persistent. Steadily the new social ideas have, as we have seen, shaped the course of legislation and of affairs. An inefficient, out-of-date system of public instruction, founded on the old economics, is being reconsidered in the light of the better results attained in this and other countries; an Old Age Pension law is well in operation. The problem of the unemployed is forcing home the socialistic idea of opening up literally new *fields* of industry by the expropriation of great deer-parks, sequestered now for the amusement of another type of idlers. To lift a little the burden from the rest of the nation the tax-gatherer now reaches over with additional demands upon the landed gentry. The doctrine of Henry George, already fruitful in some of the colonies, gets an incipient avowal in the budget of Parliament, shaking the United Kingdom from center to circumference.

Speaking of the work of the London County Council, Munro says: "An important branch of the Council's work is connected with the erection and maintenance of dwellings and lodging-houses for the working-classes. The statutes require that whenever

the Council displaces any population in order to make way for public improvements, it shall provide for the rehousing, in the immediate neighborhood, of an equal number of persons. In addition to these mandatory statutes a number of permissive acts have empowered the Council, as well as other local authorities, to demolish unsanitary buildings and replace them by modern structures, due compensation being of course awarded to the owners of the expropriated property. Under both of the above classes of powers the County Council has embarked extensively upon housing schemes. In one case it has laid waste a tract of nearly fifteen acres and immediately rebuilt it with model tenements that now accommodate upwards of five thousand persons. Many less extensive undertakings of the same nature have been put through by the Council, till at the present time the dwellings and lodging-houses which it has provided accommodate about 35,000 persons, a small sized city of themselves." \*

Hungary, which beneath an aristocratic surface, an "upper crust," is ardently socialistic, finds its government occasionally doing things which set the world staring. For instance, in Budapest, a combination of landlords having pushed the rent of houses for common people excessively high, the prime minister, Dr. Wekerle, acting for the government, has just built on the outskirts of the city a model village consisting of 960 houses — 4,300 flats — all of taste-

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\* *Government of European Cities*, p. 370.

ful construction and with modern improvements, designed to accommodate 25,000 persons, and renting at only 30 per cent. of what landlords were charging for residences less desirable. Dr. Wekerle would not admit being a socialist, but such an object lesson in socialism has not before been given by any national government. And it was given, not in the way of a social experiment or from any prompting of "advanced ideas," but simply by constraint of an intolerable economic situation, such as, under the existing order of things, may arise any day in any city.

THE WORK OF MUNICIPALITIES FOR SOCIAL  
BETTERMENT

This action of the Hungarian premier has attracted much attention because it is the action of a State government; done by a municipality it would have been nothing so very extraordinary. It is to municipalities, therefore, that we must turn for the more abounding examples of what we must call unconscious embodiment of socialistic ideas in law and custom. Our cities expend such large amounts for the maintenance of free schools as to dwarf out of sight the contribution to the fund derived from the State,—amounts that may well amaze observers from other countries. A fair idea of what they are doing, at least in the North and West, may be drawn from the budget for schools of the two leading cities. For operating expenses alone, Chicago applies about \$8,000,000 annually, and New York, \$23,000,000. These generous sums do not include the millions



spent every year for new school buildings and sites. The old-fashioned English economists would have been horrified at this socialistic use of the taxpayers' money. Probably nine-tenths of the beneficiaries of these vast expenditures are children whose parents or guardians pay not one-fiftieth part of the tax; but this counts for nothing, the accepted theory being that it belongs to the community to provide for the education of all its children without the slightest regard to the financial ability or inability of the parents. The accepted theory is even more comprehensive, reaches beyond the children, and, if in a less systematic way, imposes upon the community the duty of providing in some degree for the instruction of all its members. To this end we have free-libraries everywhere. In cities they are richly endowed, and supplemented by museums and galleries of art, all dedicated freely to the culture and delectation of the whole people. This is not saying that these good things reach all, for society has not yet so perfected itself that every one has time or strength to do more than provide against freezing and starving.

Fire and police protection, plainly communistic, is universal in modern cities, and no one could ever think of dispensing with it. The same is to be said of our parks, purchased and embellished at great cost, open to all comers. They have, to be sure, a restricted private commercial bearing which a school-building or an engine-house has not, in that they enhance the value of contiguous property, but their communistic quality prevails, as one sees when, on

summer holidays, the thronging thousands pour into them.

Municipal ownership of public utilities, water-works, lighting-plants, tramways, etc., is so obviously a further advance toward socialism as to have been bitterly opposed for that reason. As to water-supply, however, the advantage is so manifest that already more than half our American cities have made the innovation. Many also provide their own light. Municipal ownership of lighting-plants has gone much further in the United Kingdom than with us, two hundred and fifty-six gas-plants, representing a capital of \$180,000,000, being in the hands of cities in 1903. Electric lighting has passed yet more largely under municipal management. Almost all cities have their own water-works. About one-half the lines of tramway are owned and operated by the cities, resulting in the reduction of fares to about half what they were under private ownership. Many cities own considerable farming-land which they cultivate in connection with the disposal of their sewage; others have petitioned for the privilege of entering into various branches of manufacture and of trade. Birkenhead owns its ferries, the little town deriving from them, low as are the charges, a net annual income of \$30,000; Nottingham deals in live-stock; Birmingham owns and runs a large farm, and so well as to get a revenue of \$125,000 a year; Liverpool makes artificial stone; Glasgow has its own telephone system. And German cities are not a whit behind.

## SUMMARY

From these out of countless available facts of like bearing, we see that human society in its property and labor relations has been from the first changing its basis. In all the earlier ages the change went on with exceeding slowness, so that students of the subject in those days, had there been any then, might well have thought they were living under a fixed, divinely appointed social order, to meddle with which would be something in the nature of sacrilege. But in later time, in our own day when the transition is rapid enough to be seen and felt, there is certainly no reputable excuse for such an attitude.

The changes at which we have hastily glanced have not gone on at equal pace in all lands and among all races, and have not ordinarily been marked off by anything in the nature of revolution; it is not, therefore, an altogether simple thing to specify the successive stages of this social movement. The epochs fall into numerous divisions and subdivisions; suffice it here to note these eight grand stages:—

1. The primitive stage of Communism, which in a manner has here and there persisted with isolated tribes down to our own time.

2. Stage of private property in movables—food, dress, utensils, and so forth, creating only slight distinctions among the holders.

3. Stage of private property in movables *and* immovables. Private ownership of land. Inequality widens.

4. Stage of property in man. Extension of tillage gives land-owner importance; he requires slaves to work his estates. Urban luxury also calls for them.

5. Stage of Feudalism. Slaves superseded by vassals having a semblance of liberty, fighters as well as toilers for the high and mighty. Feudal lords loosely confederated in the kingdom.

6. Stage of incipient private industry and commerce. Rise of the "third estate" (bourgeoisie, commons, middle class), which by manufacture and trade acquires wealth.

7. Stage of Industrial Revolution. Age of steam; application of machinery to production. Laborers become wage-earners, forming the proletariat. Employers wax rich and powerful.

8. Stage of Political and Social Revolution. Barons overthrown and despoiled by the bourgeoisie. Subsidence of feudalism. Industrial revolution complete. Struggle of the proletariat with the new masters of the world.

This is an outline which on the whole synchronizes with the general march of civilization, though the stages reach over and interlock here and there. A trace of primitive communism, or at least of the second stage of the above tabulation, holds on even yet in the *mir* of Russia, by which the land in certain parts belongs not to individuals but to the commune, and is parceled out to the cultivators rent free and according to the labor capability of the families composing the commune. The stage of slavery, which generally preceded feudalism, persisted in America

past the middle of the nineteenth century, and still persists in the Portuguese colonies. In Japan feudalism survived until recent times. The course of social development, therefore, is not to be thought of as a movement *en masse* of civilized mankind. It may be symbolized as an imaginary river of undiscovered source, for the first long stretches flowing sluggishly over an immeasurable plain, hindered by insignificant obstacles, loitering in large lagoons, gaining some headway now and then in the central channel where at any time the waters may be thousands, tens of thousands of years in advance of the waters at the margin on either side, but altogether meandering so aimlessly as to be not infrequently about as far from the goal as at the outset; which, however, arriving at length at a seaward slope, seems to get a consciousness of its destiny and show a purposeful haste. So it has happened that while the first five stages of our reckoning probably covered hundreds of thousands of years, the last three are included within a few centuries. It is especially with these latter that we are here concerned.

In these three stages the evolutionary process is clearly before us, and we are not likely to be mistaken as to its significance. As we have seen, radical changes have taken place, innovations altogether strange to previous history, and which from the socialist point of view are the world's chief gains thus far made; and this we note: they have been brought about, not by any consciously socialist propaganda, but by unescapable moral and economic

necessities. The socialist tendency is seen, and conspicuously seen, to lie in the very nature of the social situation, in the commonest instincts of justice; to belong inseparably to the march of civilization. Every now and then we have some broad principle of socialism, or rather some application of such a principle, enacted into law by legislators who would scorn to be classed as socialists,—showing how vastly stronger are these principles than the name they go by. But opponents of this sort of legislation have seen clearly enough what at bottom it is, and have not hesitated to distinctly characterize it as socialistic. The characterization is none the less correct for being made with the obvious intent of frightening the electors. In the canvass for the parliamentary election of 1910 the voters of the United Kingdom had it forced home to them by the opposition orators that the Liberals were marching straight toward socialism, that the budget proposed by them and disallowed by the Lords must, sanctioned by the vote of the people, open the way to the final expropriation of land and capital. Warning voices were heard from across the sea and from across the channel. The framer of the budget and the ministry whose existence was staked on it were roundly denounced as socialists, little as they so regard themselves. The most distinguished French economist of the old school considered them and the French ministry whose budget, based on the same principles, was pending, more temerarious than are recognized and confessed socialists. “God save us,” he wrote, “from

ministers who have passed for conservative! A minister originally radical or socialist would show less precipitancy in projects of this sort." But the English ministry stood the test of an election, and the French was put to no test, but in the regular election has been amply sustained; the policy of each, socialistic as it is, prevails. The world moves, and there is no room to doubt which way it moves.

All the considerable class of legislation out of which the examples enumerated in this chapter have been drawn, has been the work, be it observed, not of socialist ministers and law-makers, but of men belonging to the old political parties, who were constrained by the imperative necessities of the situation to make these concessions to a doctrine they are supposed not to approve, and to a party, altogether inconsiderable, which they stoutly oppose. What unexampled excellence must reside in a system of social teachings which draws to one or another of its features the substantial though reluctant homage of even its avowed enemies! And what must be its potency, seeing that it marches decade by decade, year by year, and without the support of a numerous host, from victory to victory, until the defenders of the old and reputedly established stand aghast, looking for nothing short of a general overturning! The gods must certainly be fighting on the side of a cause which has so far won its way by no material weapons or any apparent force of numbers, but solely by its truth to reason, by the imperial power of justice and of right.



## CHAPTER III

### RECENT DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIALISM

The Utopists in the first half of the nineteenth century were so enchanted with their schemes of a new society as to think that the establishment of here and there a community on their plan would afford such a demonstration of its superiority that the whole world would speedily come over to the new order. Their expectations failed. Then came the great expounders of scientific socialism, with a clearer vision laying the foundations of their system on the rock of reality, and making it clear to themselves and their followers that by the very necessities of the case a great social Revolution was at hand, a violent overturning in which the world would set itself to rights. This expectation, too, failed; but the failure was not, as before, a sad disappointment. The great leaders who looked for the inauguration of the new order by violence, and even set a time within which the decisive struggle would come, nevertheless hoped and worked for a bloodless triumph. Marx from his English covert — outlawed on the continent — and Lassalle in the forefront of the hottest contest, wrought for the creation of a political force that could be marshaled in the furtherance of the new ideas, that, taking

things as they are, should strive by constitutional means to bring them forward to the socialist ideal. From this point dates a new development of socialism, and thenceforth Reform, as a watchword, more and more takes the place of Revolution. From this point, too, that is, from about fifty years ago, the new ideas, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, seem to have taken to working for themselves. They began to get into the heads of people who were never suspected of being socialists; they inspired thousands to deeds of generous self-sacrifice for many a good cause; they brought forward the ideals of peace and brotherliness in a world which groaned under a system of things calculated to provoke discord, envy, corruption, hatred, and many another abomination; they shaped legislation in a way to protect the weak and lay the heavier burdens upon the strong; they set townspeople working together, each according to his ability, in an ever-increasing number of common interests,—until now the world, without ever the socialists as a party striking a decisive blow, is, as the conservatives avow, half given over to socialism.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARTY IN GERMANY

However much or little the socialist movement as such may have had to do with the inception of this tendency to better things, it certainly took on form and strength at an opportune moment to be a mighty re-enforcement of the good cause. The

socialist party rose to importance in Europe when it did because the time was ripe for it, because events were moving its way, and because it was needed to urge them on. Lassalle founded his General Working-men's Association in 1863, the avowed object of which was to press upon the government the granting of universal suffrage. That gained, he thought the way would be open for the workers to obtain all other just demands by the mere force of numbers. As they constitute a majority in every land, they would have only to pull together, and dominion, in a constitutional State, would be in their hands. The immediate outlook was bad, for a class largely disfranchised is under grave disadvantage in preferring requests; but let the people as a body claim their rights, and they must be heard. He thought that if his Association acquired a membership of 100,000 it could really do something. He set out to secure that number; but in all such undertakings it is the first step that costs. The working-men did not respond as he expected them to. Even after fifteen months of arduous effort, canvassing the country, speaking everywhere to crowds of people, he was able to muster for his Association less than one-twentieth the membership he had deemed necessary to make a favorable impression upon the government. But his tragic death, which seems to have been that of a man shattered by disappointment in a work on which he had set his heart and soul, electrified the working-

men as even his eloquence had not. They rallied then to the standard that he had set up. Manhood suffrage was decreed in Germany, and at the election in 1871 the Social Democracy polled 124,655 votes. From that date its advance was rapid. At the election of 1877 the count was 493,288; in 1887 it attained to 763,128. In the next six years the party had a phenomenal growth, polling in 1893 1,786,738 votes; in 1898, 2,107,076; in 1907, 3,258,968. As early as 1893 the Social Democracy became by far the largest party in Germany, and so it steadily remains. That it does not elect a majority in the Reichstag and control legislation is owing wholly to the refusal of the government to make a redistribution of seats on the basis of present population. There has been no distribution since 1871. Meantime the population has well nigh doubled, the gain being all in the towns, while the rural districts have lost; so that now in proportion to number of inhabitants the cities have much less of a voice in legislation than have the country precincts. Berlin, for instance, has grown from 600,000 to about 2,000,000. The city had six representatives in the Reichstag in 1869, the basis being (approximately) one to 100,000. On the same basis it should now have twenty; it still has six. As the socialist majorities are in the cities, and those of the Center (Clericals) and Conservative parties chiefly in the country districts, it happens that three times as many—even more than three times as many—votes are required to

elect a socialist as to elect a clerical. Thus in 1907 the Center returned one member for every 20,800 votes cast by that party; the ratio of socialist votes to members elected was 75,800 to 1. This is a crying injustice, equal to the worst of our gerrymandering, and greatly more sweeping.

But while this exasperating discrimination against the urban electors reduces shamefully the power of the party on a division in the Reichstag, the moral influence of members who have behind them constituencies three times as large as those of other members cannot but be felt. This in fact comes out in the collectivist legislation of the last thirty years. To be noted particularly is the system of State insurance for working-men, greatly extended beyond what was contemplated by the original act of Bismarck's time. Imposing indeed is the amount — over \$100,000,000 — annually distributed in the form of benefits and indemnities; as is also the number of persons insured against sickness, accident, and old age, running up, it would seem, in one and another category to two-thirds or more of the whole population of the empire. Such manifestations of paternal interest on the part of the government in the poorest of the people have a favorable effect upon their spirits and their habits, and we are prepared to believe the reports of observers that the German laborer, low as are his wages, is more orderly, more thrifty, less apprehensive about his future, than most of his class. Not that he is by any means satisfied

with the situation, but that he is encouraged to see things tending, even though slowly, his way.

It is to be clearly observed that mere ameliorations of the working-man's lot are no part of the programme of the party. They are a sort of reflex action of socialist sentiment on other elements of the body-politic, an automatic outworking in the public mind in some shadowy way of certain principles zealously proclaimed through the country these fifty years. So far indeed have the various mitigations offered by the government been from meeting the demands of the socialists as a party that they have been cool observers rather than urgent advocates of the measures, assenting, to be sure, but with no great ardor. They see in these measures steps in the right direction — steps which they expect will continue to be taken until the party comes into power and without further ado completes the transformation; but so little way toward the goal does one of these ameliorating acts make, they do not wax enthusiastic over it, do not appear as its sponsors; they take it, not as a grant of human rights, but as an admission of long-standing wrongs, with a trifling indemnity thrown in. Since 1891 the Social Democracy has stood on the Declaration then made at Erfurt, a statement which should be carefully examined by all who would know what exactly the doctrines of socialism in our day are. It first sets forth very succinctly the actual situation and the proposed changes, as follows:—

“ Private ownership of the instruments of production, which in former times assured to the producer the property in his own product, has now become the means of expropriating peasant proprietors, hand-workers, and small dealers, and of placing the non-workers, the capitalists, and the great land-owners in possession of the product of the workmen. Only the conversion of the capitalistic private property in the means of production — land, mines, raw-material, tools, machines, facilities of communication — into social property; and the transformation of the production of wares into socialistic production, carried on for and through society, can bring it about that the great production and constantly increasing productivity of social labor may become for the hitherto exploited classes, instead of a source of misery and oppression, a source of the highest welfare and of all-sided, harmonious development.

“ The struggle of the working class against capitalistic exploitation is of necessity a political struggle. To shape this struggle into a conscious and united one, and to point out to the workers its inevitable goal, — this is the task of the Social Democratic party.”

The Declaration recognizes that ameliorations, unconsciously socialistic and of more or less value, are being introduced; that these indicate a process of socialization which it belongs to the party to hasten, to extend, to deepen, and above all to dignify with a clearly-conscious ultimate purpose. To these



ends, and pending the existence of the present social order, the party will keep in view and work for these objects:—

1. Universal, equal, and direct suffrage for all men and women of the Empire over twenty years of age.

2. Direct legislation through the people, by means of the right of proposal and rejection. Self-government of the people in Empire, State, Province, and Commune.

3. Universal training in military duty, with abolition of standing armies. Settlement of all international difficulties by arbitration.

4. Abolition of all laws which suppress or restrict the free expression of opinion and the right of union and meeting.

5. Abolition of all laws which, in public or private matters, place women at a disadvantage as compared with men.

6. Religion a private matter. No public funds to be applied to ecclesiastical or sectarian purposes.

7. Secularization of schools. Compulsory attendance at the public people's schools. Free opportunity for higher education to the more talented.

8. Administration of justice and legal advice to be free. Abolition of capital punishment.

9. Free medical attendance; free burial.

10. Progressive income, property, and inheritance taxes. Abolition of all indirect taxes, customs, and other financial measures which sacrifice the collective interest to the interests of a privileged minority.

Further demand is made for effective national and international regulations in protection of workmen on specific lines, such as a normal working day of not to exceed eight hours; prohibition of the employment of children under fourteen years of age in money-making labor; thirty-six hours of weekly respite; and thorough supervision of all industrial establishments by the State.

It is fairly obvious that simple continuance of the tendencies now in operation in any country would finally eventuate in meeting every one of these demands; and justification of the movement so far as it has gone would seem to imply justification of it to the end of its course. But men of convictions are not accustomed to sit idly by and let things drift merely because they seem to be drifting in the right direction. Such men feel that it belongs to them to direct the current of events, to clear its course and speed its way. It is a great thing for the German Social Democracy to have reached a definite programme which rules out anarchy on one side, and any puttering scheme of philanthropy on the other, and plants itself on the science of mighty thinkers who in these matters laid the irrefragable foundations; which will make the best of the present, but never leave out of sight a future now becoming definitely disclosed as the morning star of hope.

The party is a model of organization for its purposes of education and propagandism. The marvelous gains made since 1871 indicate that

the time cannot be far distant when the socialists will be the governing majority, and they feel that for this enormous responsibility they need the amplest possible mental training. To this end, and to keep up the ever-swelling tide of its growth, the party carries on, says Robert Hunter, "a propaganda of incredible dimensions. Its journals reach no less than 1,049,707 subscribers. There are sixty-five daily papers, and about twelve weekly and monthly periodicals. A comic paper, 'Der wahre Jacob,' alone has a circulation of 230,000; and 'Die Gleichheit,' a journal for working women, has over 60,000 regular subscribers. Its organ in Berlin, 'Vorwärts,' has a circulation of 120,000. The party employs twenty-eight organizing secretaries, who go about the country assisting the branches in the work of organization and propaganda. In September, 1906, the national committee on education opened a school in Berlin for the purpose of training working-men as organizers, secretaries, and editors. About thirty students are sent there entirely at the expense of the party." \* No one can go into one of the socialist meetings in whatever humble quarter and listen to the speakers without being struck, not only with their ready and forceful utterance, but with the range of information shown. The method by which politics becomes a veritable education and a training is something that might advantageously be brought over to America.

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\* *Socialists at Work*, p. 5.

A matter of perpetual astonishment to the American (even more perhaps to the English) visitor of local socialist assemblies on the continent at whose sittings there usually go on open and long-continued discussions, is the familiarity of speakers, seen by their garb to be working-men, with the philosophy and science of socialism as set forth in so abstruse, so formidable a work as *Das Kapital* of Karl Marx. These brown-visaged, rough-handed men, and these plainly-clad, serious-looking women, acquire, many of them, from frequent public use of their gifts of speech an enviable facility of utterance at which we do not so much wonder; but that they—that any of them—should also show a good comprehension of great treatises which not one Englishman or American in a thousand can bring himself to read, is to us astounding. It marks in the people of Northern Europe a distinctive quality which accounts in a manner for the position that socialism has taken there, so different from what we see in this country or in the United Kingdom.

#### SOCIALISM IN GREAT BRITAIN

In the United Kingdom socialism from the first has had a very different course of development. Marx spent the great part of his active life in London, building his works on data drawn from English economic history, scarcely touching an English workman or stirring so much as a ripple in English thought. Until within very recent years the English proletariat has remained almost impervious

to socialism. Among the middle and the literary classes, however, toward the end of the last century it got a foothold, and a work has since gone on, the more interesting to note because it has proceeded in its own way with little regard to methods elsewhere pursued. There was, apparently, among the active spirits becoming enlisted in the movement a surplus of leaders whose several strong inclinations were not to be subordinated to a single guidance, who could not work in one body, after one programme, to one end. This estopped at the outset the formation of a new political party,—a scheme, moreover, which was pretty generally considered of doubtful feasibility on British ground. As in America, there seemed to be no field for a third party, no chance for it to come to anything, parties, as by fore-ordination, dividing by a single cleft; whereas in other countries the electors fall into several groups, the representatives of any one of which by combination with other groups in parliament may become influential. All that seemed to be left the English socialists was the common, plodding process of educating their public, diffusing the new ideas by the voice and the press; and this they earnestly took hold of, obedient to the proverb, *festina lente*. The leading organization with this motive, and one still active and prominent, took the name of The Fabian Society, indicating thereby that it planned no rash or showy things, content to do its best and bide its time, even though it should seem to “only stand and wait.” Other organizations were formed, each

following its own bent, all working independently and with little concerted action, yet bringing about, or helping to bring about, if with some waste and much friction, highly important results.

The English contention has been that the sure way to make a movement succeed and render its success desirable, is to get behind it the best people, the trained and instructed classes. These, imbued with the spirit of a great reform, will give to its propaganda a security, a sanction not to be lightly esteemed; they will be the shining centers from which light will permeate all obscurer quarters. The British working-man is a stolid body not to be galvanized into an apostle, incapable of the far-vision or of any passion for other good than that which is at hand. It is idle to expect him to start the car of progress; he may be picked up and brought into it later on.

Accordingly the literary lights of the movement directed their attention to the reading public, and produced a body of socialist literature of a high order, which has had an incalculable influence. Written without specific political animus, these books, essays, tracts, scattered by the hundred thousand up and down the land, have set multitudes on trains of reflection fatal to confidence in the present order of things, have shaped the course of much legislation, have created conscious socialist sentiment in countless hamlets and homes where it was never felt before. Sidney and Beatrice Webb, George Bernard Shaw, Graham Wallas, H. G. Wells, William Morris, Robert

Blatchford, and many another name of power, have become household words, more, perhaps, for light shed on social problems than for any brilliant work in other fields.

The English socialists have generally taken a very sober attitude on the questions involved in this movement. They have not fostered the fancy that the day of the world's redemption from the bondage of capitalism and the odious wage-system is at hand; they have taught that social processes are evolutionary, not revolutionary, and therefore necessarily slow in operation, creating nothing *de novo*, but laboriously and little by little educing each succeeding stage out of that which went before. Man, impulsive and eager, longs for the consummation, thinks of precipitating it, — dreams that the world in the first place was made in a week, and imagines that it can be made over in another week. Prophets of all names who have had foregleams of a better world to be, have looked for its speedy realization. But the student observes that they have invariably been disappointed. God alone is absolutely patient, and that because he has no end of time. In the natural order the greatest good is not to be immediately consummated; it lies at the end of a long series of approaches. Consequently, if we would co-operate with Nature in this matter of social advancement, and so work to some purpose, we must start from the existing order of society as a basis, and seek by such gradual transformations as are now possible to further the forward movement so easily traceable and



showing such obvious acceleration through the last four centuries.

English repugnance to the idea of revolution comes out in this, and a reflection of the submissiveness, amounting at times to hebetude, with which grievous wrongs have been borne by the toilers through the centuries; and withal there is the positing of a philosophical vindication not to be readily disposed of. Furthermore, a strong point can be made empirically for this attitude. England has had no revolution for two hundred and fifty years; but it cannot be said that in respect of social advancement, of light and liberty, England is at all behind lands where revolutions have been of frequent occurrence. A solid conclusion to which the English have helped the world in this: a revolution is serviceable and defensible only where despotism so restrains the play of spiritual forces that an orderly development is impossible save through a violent rupture of bands.

To this view socialists have been coming from the time they definitely shook themselves free from anarchy. But, even in Great Britain, they have generally been forced to see that, if in the struggle for so great a social change as they are demanding they are to eschew violence and use only the legitimate weapons of peace, *then these weapons ought every one to be employed*. While a few of the more credulous, marking the meliorations in the condition of the working classes effected by acts of parliament — particularly under Liberal administrations — without a socialist in either House, were disposed to think

that by the force of ideas alone, by individual effort and without any sort of political organization, the whole reform was going to be worked out, the militant socialists grew impatient with the slow march of events, and poured furious criminations upon the Liberal party, whose leaders they accused of insincerity, of double-dealing, of a studied plan to sow discord among the socialists, promising much and doing little. It is the difference between regarding a matter judicially and regarding it politically. From the point of view of the politician, there can be no doubt since the general election of January, 1910, that the Liberal ministry which was before the country for approval had gone as far in the direction of socialism as "good politics" could possibly have permitted. This admission, however, only strengthens the argument for a political party openly pledged to socialist principles.

Ten or twelve years ago, Mr. J. Keir Hardie, an energetic and clear-headed Scotchman, began working with might and main for the union of all laborers, whether socialists or not, in a political organization for their own protection. The elements he sought to join were far from being harmonious, and his task was beset with doubt and difficulties and stolid reluctance to a degree that would have disheartened a man of less clear convictions or a less determined spirit. In view of what he and those associated with him in this undertaking had to contend with, the success which they at length achieved appears remarkable. The Independent Labor Party, as the

outcome is called, now counts over a million voters, fully half of whom have given assent to the socialist programme. At the recent general election they returned forty members of Parliament. This group certainly cut a very important figure just now, as at any moment the life of the Liberal ministry may hang upon their votes. Circumstances have thrust upon them an influence and a power such as the representatives of labor never before commanded in the United Kingdom, the situation of the House of Commons having come to resemble that of the French *Chambre des Députés*, where, to form a government with a secure working majority, the radicals are obliged to combine with the socialists.

Never was the creation of a party better timed to demonstrate the wisdom of the movement. In the previous House the labor votes were not needed by the Liberal ministry, and the few labor representatives wielded only the influence their individual talent might command. Now they are in a position to obtain any reasonable thing they may ask for. Anticipating this predicament as a possible outcome of the election, the Liberal leaders in the heat of the canvass broached the grave question of the unemployed, which before had been left to drift, though by far the most pressing that confronts the nation. All at once they were ready with a solution of the appalling problem whereat every reflecting Englishman has stood aghast for years, — a very simple solution, too, but through and through socialistic: they would bring in a bill providing State insurance against unemployment.

They may not be strong enough to keep that pledge or to carry out that suggestion, but it is something to have made it. On the whole the political situation never took on anything like its present interest to the socialist, and there is good reason to expect a great development of the strength of the party.

#### SOCIALISM IN FRANCE

France, where theoretical and revolutionary socialism may be said to have had its birth, has also been the field of its chief trials and tragedies. An enthusiastic and adventuresome people who had caught after many a fiery gleam of promise only to see it set up a conflagration among them, could hardly have avoided a similar experience with the proffered boon of social betterment. The wild uprisings of the proletariat which more than once have gone down in frightful massacre, have been lessons, though costly, from which all have profited. The whole animus of the nation seems to have changed. From being the most belligerent, France has become the most pacific of powers; its government, once despotic, is, as we say, free, that is, republican, with universal manhood suffrage and equality of citizens before the law; the classes, from being inimical, have become at least tolerant of one another; there is freedom of speech and of the press. It is seen that for any and all reforms there is a peaceful path of accomplishment, and only anarchists now think of resorting to violence.

Through the period here under hasty review some

of the brightest intellects of the country have devoted themselves to the development and diffusion of the socialist ideal in one and another of its phases, producing a literature of the subject which gives France in this respect a distinct lead. In no other country, if in all other countries together, is there to be found such an array of brilliant minds enlisted in the cause, — scholars, professors, authors, orators, statesmen, — among them names of such eminence that French socialists may proudly claim to have with them a good share of the very foremost of their countrymen. This comes out rather strikingly in the political situation. The socialists count but a small fraction of the deputies, only about fifty, and these have been of late years nominally a part of the government's working majority. On the fall of the Clemenceau ministry in 1909, one of its members, M. Briand, elected by the socialists and conspicuous among them in other years, was called on to form a new ministry. This he did, and when the names were announced it appeared that of the ten members, five, including the President of the Council, M. Briand, were socialists.

Quondam socialists, in the final reckoning of the party, it needs to add. For by rigorous rule, reached after mature reflection, a man who accepts office in the conduct of the government forfeits his standing in the party. The matter first came up in 1899, when Waldeck-Rousseau in forming his ministry, feeling the need of socialist support in the Chamber, offered to M. Millerand, a leading socialist deputy, a port-

folio. Immediately the question arose: Can a socialist who has in view an order of things radically different from the present order, consistently take part in the direction of a government which must for the present proceed on the old lines? No question ever arose as to the propriety of his sitting in the legislature, for there he sits in opposition until such time as, his party coming to be a majority, the government shall be conducted on the new principles. But how about the new wine going into the old bottles? There was much to be said, and much was said, on both sides. For the next five years it was the standing topic of discussion at all gatherings of the party, of which it threatened a complete rupture. The leaders in this hot and long-continued debate were Jaurès for, and Guesde against, socialists taking part in the government under the existing régime as opportunity might offer. Guesde is the older man, one who was pursued as a disturber under the empire, and for a time even under the republic; utterly fearless, made for deeds of daring; a mind rigorously logical and stored with inexhaustible knowledge bearing on socialism. The whole social philosophy of Karl Marx is in his head and at his tongue's end, freed from forbidding technicalities. His oratory is not of the showy kind, derives nothing from charm of voice or manner, but everything from profound conviction, clear vision and clear statement. He is not swayed by personal sympathy, and makes no appeal to feeling. Sentiment is nothing, principle is everything to him. Jaurès is a very different type

of man. Educated for university life, he held a chair of philosophy before coming into the political arena. Of extraordinary oratorical gifts, he became leader of his party in parliament, and has spoken for socialism in every quarter of France. Vigorous in body as in mind, he is capable of incredible exertion, seems never wearied with his multifarious labors as editor of a leading journal, prominent deputy, perpetual propagandist, famous talker always in request. His speech is a torrent whose very volume seems to carry all before it. It is no small testimony to Guesde's power that he can stand against such an orator and not be unanimously voted second best.

There was a strong feeling that to decline to hold office in the government was to miss a great opportunity to do something directly in the way of shaping affairs more in accordance with the socialist ideal. To be sure nothing sweeping could be done, as the socialists would be but a minority in the cabinet, and there would be call unescapable for much compromising; but then it was urged that where government is of necessity conducted jointly by different groups, compromise is imperative, and the smaller group can be only a minority in the ministry. Jaurès contended with much force that in a liberal State like France where there is universal manhood suffrage, we have not government exclusively by a class; that the socialists, being a group of the controlling coalition in the Chamber, should not, more than any other group so situated, renounce the opportunity to take their part in the government. He admitted that in



a State like Germany where the government does not hold itself responsible to the representatives of the people, there might be reason in a socialist declining office (in the very unlikely case of its being offered him), but in a free State the situation was different.

Guesde strenuously opposed this policy, and, the party in France being unable to come to an agreement, carried the matter up to the International Congress at Amsterdam in 1904 for final determination. It was, as may be supposed, the occasion of one of the most famous debates of modern times, Bebel, leading the German representation, joining in to overwhelm the French "revisionists," as the element that favored taking part in the government had come to be called. It is capital proof of the discipline established in the party that Jaurès and his followers, though not convinced, bowed to the verdict of the majority, accepting the adverse decision by virtue of which the present Prime Minister and several of those associated with him in the Council are formally excluded from the Unified Socialist party. It takes courage and determined resolution to cut off such men on grounds of policy over which there is evidently room for wide difference of opinion.

The party is now thoroughly organized with all the requisite machinery of propagandism, the different and heretofore conflicting elements better held together. It is the only party that has made notable gains in the recent election, having won a number of seats from the Radicals, still the most numerous party in the Chamber. The latter console themselves

for their losses in that they were made to their friends who will vote with them on a division involving the life of the ministry.

In France, as elsewhere, socialists are guarding themselves from a too exclusive absorption in politics, and devote much attention to industrial questions, to working-men's societies and labor unions. Strenuous efforts are being made to unite, as far as may be, the two lines of interest without confounding the forms of organization. At the international Congress at Stuttgart in 1907 earnest consideration was given to this important matter, so vital to all concerned,—to the party whose complete success depends on gathering under its banner the entire working-class, and to the unions themselves, whose ends can be largely reached only by strong political backing. The slowness of the workers to see this and act on it is all that now stands in the way of great achievements. The call of Marx has still to be echoed and re-echoed: "Working-men, get together!"

#### PROGRESS IN BELGIUM

The socialist movement has made great headway in Belgium, whose peasantry has for centuries been the worst exploited and oppressed in Europe. The capitalistic system has there had complete development and shown just what it leads to,—wonderful "prosperity"; that is to say, a small upper class, with the late king at its head, rolling in wealth which is kept rapidly increasing; a numerous proletariat

overfilling the little country, living on wages so low as to be ever on the brink of starvation, too poor to get out of a land which Nature has so blest and man has so curst, and shamefully kept in ignorance and helplessness by long denial and still persisting restriction of political rights. Socialism came to that poor people, neglected by the government and trodden upon by capital, and showed them ways of helping themselves, of making their lives less miserable. It taught them association, co-operation; made them see that the combination of thousands of hands, each bringing a few pence, was a secret of power, might be the beginning of a little independence, a little liberation from their bondage. So it has come about that in Belgian cities there will generally be found a *Maison du Peuple*, term which, like the word "church," means at once a house and the society that uses it. That at Brussels may be taken as a type of these great co-operative societies of laborers. There the central *Maison du Peuple* is nothing less than a people's palace adapted to the various needs of the society, with a spacious auditorium in which famed socialist speakers are heard, a good restaurant, library, gymnasium, and all conveniences of a great club-house. This is the headquarters of the association; the co-operative works are scattered about the city. These are in several lines of business, primarily undertaken for the purpose of reducing the price of commodities to consumers. The *Maison du Peuple* has built two great bakeries which turn out 25,000,000 pounds of bread annually. Though

the price of loaves has been materially reduced, the business yields to the co-operators a substantial profit. They have also large coal-yards, four butcher-shops, and twenty-five shops for the sale of bread and groceries. The result is that for the co-operators' own consumption the whole element of profit on these necessities is eliminated. Beside the main House of the People with its generous accommodations, they have five other smaller Houses at convenient points about the city, affording places of meeting, instruction, refreshment, and various entertainment for the members. No socialist having a day in Brussels should fail to visit the *Maison du Peuple*. Something under the name will be met with in neighboring lands, but hardly anywhere anything of the kind so pleasant to see.

If it must be admitted that, so far, the development of a socialist party in our own country is less of a success, it may justly be claimed that socialist tendencies in the old parties are even more notable here than elsewhere. Not a few of the leaders, Democratic and Republican alike, show by occasional utterances that they have caught something of the Collectivist spirit. They contend vigorously for the conservation of the forests, the mines, the natural sources of power, as the common property of the whole people; insist that the State regulate the industries, supervise transportation, check the greed of corporations, protect all manner of toilers from oppression. Political opponents are not slow in classifying these men with an unwelcome precision. Mr.

Bryan, three times Democratic candidate for President, has since been called, on account of his expressed opinions, the logical candidate of the socialists at the next election. Certain of the Progressive or "Insurgent" Republicans have shown even yet more decided leanings in the same direction. A correspondent of *The Nation*, coming to the defense of Theodore Roosevelt from editorial criticism, feels constrained to exonerate himself from the suspicion of a too partial judgment by protesting, "I am not a socialist." The ex-President some time since sought to forestall the charge of being one, by a much-resented aspersion of socialists in general; nevertheless no other public man in America has said and done so much for the furtherance of socialist tendencies.

Though the party as yet is imperfectly organized, it is not without its able leaders. Its numerous journals are vigorously conducted, one of them, *The Appeal to Reason*, ranking among the widest circulated papers in the world.

These are the beginnings of great things, taking shape under adverse conditions, in the face of dominating capitalism which throws every possible obstacle in the way. They are intimations of what could be accomplished by the united effort of government and people for the equal weal of every citizen.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE NEXT STEPS TO BE TAKEN

On all sides there is a more or less pronounced feeling that grave social and economic crises are at hand. It manifests itself in the feverish apprehension of political parties, even the oldest and most conservative, over the growing power of the trusts, the rapid accumulation of wealth in the hands of a small minority which tends ever to strengthen itself by closer and closer combination, — a plutocracy that already by the very force of enormous aggregations of capital threatens to dominate everything. It is a minority of a few thousand millionaires and multimillionaires, easily to be held in check in a democracy, one might think, by the rest of the people many thousand-fold more numerous. But the barons of finance "are for their own generation wiser than the children of light." Without in the least endangering their personal control, they have absorbed into their combinations in large measure the small properties of a great middle class, and so acquired the vigorous support of a considerable body of the politically influential. These people who have poured their savings into the gigantic maw of the trusts, or into enterprises which the trusts have swallowed up, since they derive their little incomes from the dividends of these great concerns, are bound, like a mercenary soldiery,

to stand guard around the trusts, to resist and ward off the assaults of an aroused and noisy, but unorganized, poorly armed and equipped, and so not very dangerous multitude. Still, these guardians are anxious and troubled, for no one can tell at what moment a wave of indignation may sweep over the country, or what havoc it might make with political calculations should it come on the eve of a presidential election. So the party in power is hedging, seeking to show deference to a popular demand, while still acting in a manner not to alienate the money-power which has so generously contributed to its past successes; and the opposition, less cautious, hurls fiery denunciations at the plutocracy. All around there is a sense of something momentous impending, a conviction that present tendencies along certain lines are leading to conditions that will be unbearable and bring about a fearful catastrophe.

The steady advance in the price of food, whatever may be the occasion of it, is ominous, immediately disturbing to the masses whose income, as a rule, barely suffices for necessary outgoes, and begetting anxiety in reflecting minds as to the future. If, as some are saying, the rise of prices results from the manipulations and machinations of those who are in a position to control the food supply, there is here the worst impeachment yet laid against the trusts; for they would appear to have the consumers by the throat, and to be fully equipped morally and materially to practice an unlimited extortion, compelling every man, woman, and child to pay an excessive price for



subsistence under pain of forfeiting, not one pound of flesh as Shylock weakly proposed, but every pound on their bones. Hardly less startling is the prospect if, as others think, food is getting higher because of the failure of production to keep pace with normal consumption and abnormal waste; for the remedy in that case is greatly more complex and difficult of application, involving a change of the people's habits, and the institution on a large scale of intensive culture of the soil, a regression of the toilers from the cities to the fields, — in short, something in the nature of a social revolution.

Then there is the persistent problem of pauperism, not all the progress of the ages tending in the least to reduce it. On the contrary, as wealth increases and, by a fatality inseparable from the present order, falls more and more exclusively into the hands of a class, another class is left in destitution more distressing than is commonly seen in ruder civilizations. The new country, where population is sparse and nobody is rich, has no extreme poverty to complain of; that evil comes with the cultivation of the fields, the making of beautiful homes, the building of pleasant towns and splendid cities. The larger and richer your city the higher the percentage of the desperately poor, the more appalling the misery that stalks through the darker quarters. For a glimpse of the worst poverty and the most of it, one must go to New York or to London, where values astounding, values to ransom an empire, are daily exchanged. Lands that boast the very highest civilization have no end of

paupers. Every thirty-seventh person in the United Kingdom is a public charge. Millions are poured out year by year to meet the grim situation, and still the evil increases in magnitude. Society as at present constituted is obliged to content itself with partial and wholly inadequate measures of relief; is unable to so much as suggest a possible remedy. Recurring periods of enforced idleness, and the meager pay of the common laborer when he has employment, keep him ever on the verge of want, and when, as is well-nigh inevitable, he slips over into the abyss below, a pitying world looks on able to do nothing more than to drop a dole into the outstretched hand.

Idle and fatuous is any attempt to account for the hideous fact of poverty, extreme and abounding in the midst of abounding wealth, on the ground of prevailing sloth and improvidence among the poor. In some cases these are, no doubt, assignable causes. Here and there a person, rich or poor, will be indolent, prodigal; but that is never to be charged against a class, least of all against the laboring class. Their poverty, and their general inability to extricate themselves from it, are seldom their fault. As a rule poverty is a condition to which they are foredoomed, and from which escape is made exceedingly difficult by the social organization under which we live. It is, broadly speaking, a direct product of existing arrangements, and so, of course, under these arrangements nothing can be done to eradicate it. We can putter with it, we can alleviate it in spots, but as long as the machine which grinds it out keeps grinding, — when

we have toiled and sympathized and donated and done all, when we have solicited thousands, even millions, from our rich friends, and built lodging-houses and soup-kitchens galore, organized our charitable societies, established our social settlements and whatever other benevolent institutions, — we shall not have abolished, or even perceptibly lessened, the world's poverty. The producing agency will keep the stock of paupers well up to the possible limit no matter how much of this sort of effort is expended.

#### THE PROBLEM OF LAND

We are told in the Hebrew scriptures in connection with the placing of human creatures on the earth, that they were to “have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, *and over all the earth*” — over its soil, that is, and its buried treasures. And this gift bestowed by the Maker was obviously not to be appropriated by a part of the people to the exclusion of the rest; it was to be a universal inheritance, the simple terms to every man being: ‘Occupy the earth, subdue and replenish it.’ The implication is that the soil and all that underlies the soil are distinctly social property not to be sequestered for private ends, — as much so as are the sea and the fish therein, the air and its winged inhabitants. And this is perfectly the reasonable and natural view to take. By the very circumstance of being born into the world, one of right should come to an equal enjoyment with all other persons of at least every natural good, — of air and

light, water and land, minerals and sources of power. This is Nature's provision for the universal well-being of the race, and this natural bounty, falling uninterfered with upon every person, would be to each sufficient insurance against any extremity of want.

But this large provision for every child arriving on these sublunary shores has been frustrated for the vast majority. Most of us come having literally not where to lay our heads, more disinherited than the foxes or the birds of the air; and with the sorry prospect of never gaining the right, except at the sufferance of some landlord, to rest one night on the breast of the would-be nourishing mother of us all. What we are born to is poverty, exclusion from a main part of Nature's own provision for her children. The capitalist has barred us from occupation of the land from which must come almost our entire subsistence. We are still permitted to breathe the air, though for most of us that is sadly polluted with the smoke and smudge of great mills and factories in which we work and near which we must live. Use of the water supply of cities and towns we are permitted to enjoy, but the tendency is to cut us off from any particularly beautiful sheet of water, by private and exclusive possession of the entire shores. To the mind of the present writer comes a thought of a lovely lake perched on the hills of central New York,—one of the unfailing joys of his boyhood. Village and country boys rowed and fished and bathed to their hearts' content. Now, though the lake is

the natural property of the village by its side, the villagers have no access to it; they can only look at their lost possession from the somewhat distant highway as they walk or drive around the clear, blue water and its encircling palatial cottages, which stand as so many fortifications intended to enforce the interdiction of approach impudently displayed at every gateway. Dives has so fenced Lazarus out from the lake that if the former should sometime call for a drop of that water to cool his tongue the poor man couldn't get it for him.

The ultimate remedies which socialism offers for all this are necessarily radical, and subversive of much in our present social order. They are clearly set forth in the Declaration made at Erfurt in 1891, already referred to,\* in the celebrated Manifesto of Marx and Engels, and may be found elaborated in most books of socialism. Only two of the proposals need be here dwelt upon, of which the first is: socialization of the means of production — land, mines, raw-material, tools, machines, factories, facilities of communication and transport. As far as the land is concerned — using the word in its popular sense — this proposal, radical as it is, means only return to the natural and only defensible state of things, to the state in which society originally existed; † the unsophisticated savage being unable to see any other way of regarding the great provisions of Nature for man than as bounties to be freely shared by all. Private ownership

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\* Chapter III.

† Chapter II.

of land, as Marx and other socialists all along contended, — contention to which Henry George later brought a most persuasive eloquence, \* — is a mistaken custom, monstrosly productive of injustice and misery in the modern world, not merely conferring on the holder exclusive title to what is as clearly a gift of Nature to the whole people as is the air they breathe or the water they drink, but also robbing them of the unearned increment, that is to say, the advance in value, which is manifestly a social product, arising from the presence of people crowding about the property. Thus in every growing city the lucky holder of land at points toward which the tide of population flows, is, without lifting a finger, enriched at the inconvenience and at the expense of that incoming tide. The same injustice is only less egregiously apparent in every rapidly developing rural district, particularly in a new country. The first settlers, whose land cost them but a trifle, and which but for the arrival of other settlers would never have been worth much more, find themselves after a few years the possessors of valuable estates, thanks to the newcomers, who, besides paying (many of them) roundly for their own farms, have by their presence multiplied fifty, perhaps a hundred times the worth of the land first taken up. However, this gain to the first settlers is in a measure reciprocated by them, and is not much grudged. Very different is the case of the land-grabber who, favorably situated to know of localities

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\* *Progress and Poverty.*

where great natural advantages are, by extension of railroads and other furtherances, to be put in the way of speedy development, proceeds to buy up a square mile here and a square mile there, where as yet few signs of human habitation are to be seen, and then goes home and waits for honest, industrious settlers to pour in upon intervening sections and create for him new millions. He himself does nothing, is a positive obstruction to the development in which he is interested, whereby he is to be enriched; nevertheless in a few years he is able to parcel out and sell his territory at a price per acre not much below what the cultivated lands around about will bring; or, if his astuteness has been backed by sufficiently powerful influences, a town, even a city, has grown up on some one of his happily selected estates, and he draws from it a princely income.

The government, seeing the injustice of this and how much it is against the public interest, seeks in the disposition of the public domain to prevent its falling into the hands of speculators; but under the system of private ownership such a result is to be only partially obviated. Directly or indirectly the scheming operator will get hold of as much land as he pleases. There is no remedy in any such half-way measures.

The socialist proposes that the State, instead of selling land, resume possession of what it has sold, and administer the whole in the interest of all the people, renting it equitably to those who desire to occupy it. Before asking how this is to be brought



about we shall do well to note some advantages that would necessarily accrue both to the land and to its inhabitants.

The land would be better cared for. The mountains and hills would not be denuded of trees, with the frequent result of turning them into a desert, making of the rivers dangerous torrents in the spring months, and leaving them arid beds or petty rivulets for the rest of the year. The government now is doing something to save the forests, but, unhappily, its authority extends only to the public lands, rapidly decreasing in extent. The need of its reaching out further is so great that it will now and then make the vain effort, as it did a few years ago when the destruction of the then largest and finest remaining wood in the southern peninsula of Michigan was planned. The sad monument of its failure is now to be seen in some thirty square miles of worthless, boggy, stump-covered land.

The States are endeavoring by means of their agricultural schools to induce better methods of farming, to bring the productiveness of our boasted soil up to the standard of western Europe. But progress is slow; for here, again, there is no authority. If the government controlled the farms it could direct the farming, and we might expect, under expert culture, soon to see production of every sort nearly, or even quite, doubled. What that would mean for America can hardly be comprehended. It would quiet the cry of "high prices," at least until the population has doubled.

## CO-OPERATIVE INDUSTRY

For the people, disposition of the land according to the socialist doctrine would do infinitely more. It would make an end of the expression, "*unearned* increment"; what goes by that name, already known to be well earned, and earned by those who do not get it, would go where it unquestionably belongs, — to those who create it. Then, too, we should see a complete change in the make-up of the rural population. Instead of farmers and hired help — the latter with no slightest interest in the product of their toil — we should have farmers only, co-operative industry taking the place of the present procedure. Intensive culture would come in, calling for a greatly increased number of hands; and as rents would be scientifically graduated to do equal justice to all, and the land leased in parcels to suit tenants, colonies, variously numerous, from the cities, would take up their residence on the fields for the long busy seasons, plow and sow, cultivate, reap, and gather into barns. The collectivity would study to make this possible for the poorest, and small farms would be rescued from every disadvantage as compared with large ones. At present, and since the introduction of agricultural machinery, as is well known, farming on a small scale is badly handicapped by the cost of the desirable instruments, which either bars procuring them or lays upon the very limited product a disproportionate tax. Socialism would have the implements owned in suitable quantities by the community, the township; and

the use of them systematically given in turn to all the farms, thus putting large and small tracts on an equal footing as regards the cost of production.

Socialism would in like manner do away with class distinctions in all other forms of production, by substituting for present arrangements co-operative industries. To make this possible the State must possess itself of existing plants, or build others, renting them to the workers at a rate of interest on the cost not to exceed the lowest rate, or, better, half the lowest rate which the State itself has to pay; thus enabling the new establishments to start so advantageously that private capital, unable to compete with them, would be driven out of the industries. Masters of themselves, and recipients of the full meed of their toil, that is to say, recipients of what they now obtain plus the profits absorbed by the capitalists, plus whatever the present cost of management is in excess of what the cost will be under co-operation, plus the enormous aggregate now lost by employers and employed from industrial crises, strikes, and lockouts, — they would be delivered from the fear of want and from the morally hideous necessity of keeping up a war of classes to extort from unfeeling masters a penny more than will suffice to keep body and soul together.

The need for this uplift of the working people is greatly more apparent in the cities than in the country districts. The centers of population are the centers of the great industries, the seats of mills of every description, all having the double function of multi-

plying the wealth of their owners and massing a proletariat which remains permanently without wealth. The contrast between these classes in the towns goes on ever increasing, not through the poor becoming poorer—in that direction no great change for them is possible—but through the rich becoming richer. This is a spectacle calculated to provoke envy in the less favored, even if the greatly disproportionate prosperity of the opulent were simply and solely of their own earning; it is doubly galling to intelligent workers who have read political economy enough to know that all wealth is the product of labor, and that the rich become rich through an undue appropriation of the earnings of the poor, made possible by our vicious social system. So long as this lasts there can be no social peace, no Christian brotherhood.

#### HIDEOUS INEQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY UNDER THE EXISTING ORDER

The other ultimate demand of socialism to be considered here is, the abolition of inheritance. Simple justice would require that people start in life in respect of material appurtenances as nearly equal as may be. There will of course never be any equality of mental equipment, of producing power, of earning capacity; it is probably not desirable that there should be. At any rate the matter is not within the scope of human regulation. The natural gifts of a person are not a possession, they are the person himself, not his but he, his essential being; and it is his natural right that those gifts have their opportunity, pass in

the world for what they are worth; that through the exercise of them he reap his full legitimate reward. But this can seldom be in a world where the denizens set out as they do here, some the pets of fortune, their every want anticipated, all facilities of education provided—books, teachers, travel, money, everything needful—the best society opening its doors to them, an exalted position in business or professional life awaiting them at maturity; others, with better heads, it may be, and better hearts, born to poverty, deprived of any such opportunities, making their way to some education with extreme difficulty, struggling for every point of vantage gained, handicapped at every step. This monstrous inequality is not to be glossed over by citing here and there a genius who in spite of poverty has risen to eminence, or by citing any number of weaklings on whom the favors of fortune have been wasted. We all know that privileges, opportunities, all good things, are helps, priceless helps; we observe, too, that those who preach “smooth things,” and tell us how sweet is adversity, how heavenly the chastening pinch of want, what spiritual grace derives from the discipline of suffering, what strength from the bearing of heaviest burdens, do not go to any pains to have a child of theirs taste the “blessedness of drudgery” and store up the paradisaical fruits of a life-and-death struggle for existence. In the generosity of their hearts they are quite willing that other people’s children should receive the exclusive benefit of all that sort of thing.

There are those who evidently regard the existing social order as of divine institution, and who, accordingly, denounce as sacrilege any proposal to subvert or materially change it. Unless the rest of us have a wholly distorted moral vision, such minds are laboring under a pitiable confusion of the divine with the diabolical. Is it conceivable that the All-Good has given His sanction to a system of things by which a fraction of His children come into the world trailing, for "clouds of glory," titles and possessions immeasurably beyond the needs of any man, while the vast majority — equally deserving, as far as desert can be predicated of creatures who as yet have done nothing — appear in such wretched case that their very nakedness symbolizes to perfection their utter abandonment by the fate that has brought them? Would defenders of the system have us think that this is the equity of a divine Providence? that a world so existing has attained any semblance of a "kingdom of heaven," or ever can attain it under a social order so monstrously inequitable? Or are they so far gone in Mammon-worship as actually to think "Providence" has them and theirs for its favorites, and into their hands for mysterious ends commits the lion's share of earthly good,—as, in an industrial crisis, was assumed by one of the Pennsylvania coal-barons?

It is difficult to justify that which in the operation of a system facilitates the accumulation by any one man of hundreds of millions of dollars; as, making exception of such benefactions as those of Lister and

Pasteur which are incommensurable with gold, it is not possible for one by any and all honest labor to earn such sums. By hook or by crook they are acquired, as they certainly will not be under the better order to come. But here we pass over all that. So long as grasping and over-reaching are winked at, the accumulation of colossal fortunes will have its justification. Acquired by fair means or by foul, so far as they are the personal acquisition of the holders they are not absolutely unmerited; the holders have done *something* to give them a title. Altogether different is it with him who comes into the succession of millions which he has had no hand in accumulating, who has done nothing whatever to entitle him to those riches. Enormous wealth in the hands of one man in a community is not for the public weal, yet is, at the worst, a limited evil provided that it terminates at his death; perpetuated in the family from generation to generation, it becomes a veritable social menace, the undying plutocrat absorbing an ever-increasing part of the earnings of the people until their dependence is complete, and, unless socialism intervenes, a feudalism results worse than that of centuries gone by.

#### FUNDAMENTAL SOCIALIST AIMS

#### MEANS AND MEASURES FOR CARRYING THEM OUT

But it is one thing to point out an injustice in statute or custom, and another thing to rectify it. We may propose fine schemes for the purpose, and fail to get any one of them put in the way of



realization; after all is said and done, the world goes on in its beaten track. Enormous are the obstacles that confront the two socialist proposals, (1), putting into possession of the collectivity of workers the instruments of production, and (2), doing away with succession to fortunes by inheritance. In fact it does not yet appear how these so desirable objects are to be accomplished, — how, that is, within a period not hopelessly long, the constitutions of States are to be so modified as to permit such procedures, and the laws embodying them enacted. Where, indeed, after two generations of scientific socialists, stands, as to realization, the first and most fundamental of their propositions? Some enlargement of State and municipal ownership is to be seen, much of which, however, is for strategic ends, and therefore anti-social rather than socialistic; some voluntary co-operation of the working people, imposingly successful, particularly in England and Belgium, in the way of distribution; but in production, where the *crux* really lies, showing from lack of capital results too small to bring the desired consummation within glimpse of the longest sight. Henry George's land scheme — which is far from meeting the socialist demand — has made some headway in new countries where land is of little value, but the difficulties in the way of its acceptance in our day where land is dear are apparently insurmountable. Difficulties even greater, it must be confessed, obstruct the plan here advocated of socializing all instruments of industry — mines, factories, machines, railroads, telegraphs — as

well as the land. Of the two possible ways of ultimately accomplishing this, that of violent revolution has, in respect of speedy achievement, no advantage over the other; for a successful armed uprising of the proletariat is out of the question until the people committed to the cause are in a large majority, and when they are in a large majority they can attain their ends quite as quickly by peaceful means wherever there is universal suffrage.

Although the full demands of the party are not going to be met till socialists become a majority of the voters, from now on we may expect to see legislation inclining more and more their way as their numbers and influence increase. A show of energy will be directed against vast and unscrupulous accumulation of wealth, and particularly against its combinations for unsocial ends. Little by little measures will be resorted to which will be denounced as high-handed, oppressive, confiscatory even; but, as they will be taken simultaneously in all the foremost countries, aggrieved capital will be disarmed of its favorite threat to go abroad. The unearned increment in land value, already touched in the budgets of England and France, will be increasingly absorbed for public uses, coming at length to be entirely appropriated by and for the people whose just title to it has long been held good by certain of the foremost economists. A progressive income-tax, putting the burden of government expenses most on the shoulders best able to bear it, will perhaps take

the place of all indirect taxation ingeniously contrived to delude the people, and iniquitously falling upon the multitude of consumers who are poor. These and all such measures, however, since they are taken only to meet more equitably the present needs of the government, come short of making any least provision for carrying out the main idea of socialism, which is, to put the workers in control of the means of production. For that there is needed legislation looking to the accumulation in the hands of the State of a large fund expressly consecrated to the purpose of acquiring industrial properties to be forever kept free from the domination of private capital. Whence is a sum adequate for such a stupendous undertaking to be derived?

The inane programme so frequently set forth of arbitrarily dispossessing the capitalists, and, for compensation, putting them on terminable annuities of, say, one per cent. of the spoil, has done more than any other one thing to discredit our movement.\* The utter impracticability of any such scheme is enough to give the system with which it is associated a look of moonshine. If capital is to be socialized, if the

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\* Thus Grönlund: "Let a true valuation be made of the plants turned over to the community — all the water of course squeezed out; then let the collectivity compensate the 'owners' by paying annuities. Assume there be a Vanderbilt honestly entitled to \$100,000,000, pay him \$1,000,000 a year for a hundred years, without interest of course, and that will settle the account." *The New Economy*, p. 33.

vast fund requisite for acquiring the principal means of production is to be transferred from private possession to the public treasury, some less high-handed way of doing it must be found.

As prominent socialists have come to think, the proper means by which to accumulate this fund is a thorough-going inheritance-tax. The plans proposed differ as to the form of the tax, and therefore are up for discussion. One of the more radical is that of Letourneau. He says:

“Without having recourse to any violent procedure, respecting duly all acquired rights, even the wrongly acquired, the community can, when it will, adopt and enforce some gradual measures covering a long period, looking especially to the future. In such a manner Brazil in 1871 proceeded with the abolition of slavery, which it desired to accomplish without revolution or civil war. A law was passed emancipating all children thereafter born of slave parentage. Having taken this first step, the government, seventeen years later, was able to decree complete abolition of slavery without shock to the civil order. So, by stages, we may deal with the matter of inheritance. Let the State from this time on increase by degrees the rigor of its laws touching succession to properties. These laws are of unquestioned legitimacy; let the taxes imposed be progressively elevated; let them be graduated, not after the degree of relationship of the legatee, but according to the amount of the heritage. This progression in the rate of taxation, wisely arranged to go on slowly through a long series of

years, might make it possible to reach without grave disturbance the total or nearly total abolition of inheritance." \*

No legal provision permissible under the existing order of things has such possibilities for good as the inheritance-tax. It takes from no person anything that is his, anything that he ever possessed or ever earned; it, in a manner, puts something of the excess that has fallen to a few, over to the credit of all; it tends to stay the development of enormous wealth in family lines, the building up of plutocratic houses, some of which already rival, if they do not surpass, in power the royal houses of the time; and if the proceeds of the tax were only sacredly applied to the uplift of the classes whose toil has created the wealth, there is no measuring the beneficence it might be made to work. It has already in its beginnings found a place in the codes of most countries, and as the justice of the principle on which it stands is not in question, its stringency may be increased as the public welfare may seem to require. If the State has the right to levy a tax of from 1 to 20 per cent. on successions, we may suppose it has equal right to make it 40 or 60 per cent. In general the rule has been to graduate the rate (within a certain range) to the size of the fortune inherited, beginning at the lower limit with estates exceeding a very modest value, and running to the upper limit for vast properties. Next of kin are commonly protected by striking with

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\* *L'Evolution de la Propriété*, pp. 501, 502.

the heaviest tax bequests to collaterals or to strangers; these in France being hit as high as 12 per cent., stamps in addition carrying the cost up to 15 or 18 per cent. on moderate fortunes. In England the State takes about the same share. Italy has an even higher maximum.

AN INHERITANCE-TAX TO BE EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE  
PURPOSE OF SOCIALIZING THE MEANS  
OF PRODUCTION

So far the most conscious purpose of these laws is to help relieve the always pressing needs of the national treasury, though the possible effect on the overgrowth of fortunes is beginning to be recognized as an end. It remains for socialists to bring home to all their party and to the whole thinking public the wisdom of consecrating the funds derivable from this source to the great end of placing the instruments of production in the hands of the producers. Never before in the world's history was an opportunity offered at one sublime stroke to put on the way to achievement two objects of such immeasurable importance. No existing inheritance-tax has in it the vigor requisite for this masterful accomplishment. The instrument must be made for the purpose,—not contrived just to eke out a budget; it must frankly expose the end it has in view, and therefore it may have to await the arrival of the socialists to political power; but even so, nothing can be more appropriate for present consideration. This matter of heritage, if not the very next thing to come up for review and

settlement on a new basis, cannot, it would seem, in the swift transition of opinion on social questions and the rapid march of events, be long deferred.

Socialists have generally commended the progressive form of inheritance-tax, the form, that is, in which the rate rises with the magnitude of the heritage; and such is the nature of the regulations commonly adopted, though as yet the tariff is too low to put any noticeable check on accumulation. A few writers have urged that this and other important ends of the tax would be better subserved by having the rate increase, not with reference to the amount of the inheritance, but with reference to the time elapsing, the number of generations between the testator and the persons who, directly or indirectly, become the beneficiaries. The strength of the custom of inheritance, that which will make its abolition exceedingly difficult, is the natural desire of a parent to provide as well as possible for his children and his grandchildren. He will have a thought, too, for his great-grandchildren if he lives to see some of them. But further on down the line he has no special care for his posterity; they merge themselves in the mass of the now formless and non-existent, and are indistinguishable from other persons yet unborn. Attempts have been made to devise some plan of an inheritance-tax which should meet this so natural wish to continue one's bounty after one's death to those who have thus far been the recipients of it, and the equally natural lack of any special interest in individuals not now existing and whose existence at



any future time is problematical. Such a plan, could it be hit upon, would escape the resistance which abolition of inheritance must encounter, while at the same time working out substantially identical social benefits.

#### NEW FORMS OF INHERITANCE-TAX SUGGESTED

It has been proposed that succession be limited to one degree, that the property, for example, of a deceased father, after payment of the inheritance-tax, pass to his heirs, but not to be again inherited—in other words to be subjected on the death of those heirs to a second inheritance-tax of 100 per cent.; the idea being that each generation *out of its own accumulations* is bound to make provision for its immediate successor and its immediate successor only. This has seemed to others too brusque, and as not answering the demands of natural affection, often as strong for grandchildren as for children.

Eugenio Rignano has worked out a project which has more to commend it.\* He would not have the heritage entirely eaten up by the tax after the first transmission. The plan as he unfolds it contemplates two successions, the tax increasing in each instance, and consuming the remnant on the death of the heirs of the second generation. He is not, however, insistent on details, contending only for a heavy and increasing tax which shall absorb the entire legacy within a limited period, so tending strongly to the

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\* Put in French by Adolphe Landry under the title, *La Question de l'Héritage*.

nationalizing of property which is to make possible the acquisition by the State of the instruments of industry for the workers. Considering the gravity of what he sets out to do, his scheme is fairly simple, and will be grasped after a few moments of careful attention. To bring matters concretely before us, let us suppose the plan now just put in operation, and that one, whom we will call *A*, dies, leaving an estate valued at \$100,000. It pays a tax of  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent., and the legatee *B* receives the residue, \$66,666  $\frac{2}{3}$ . This amount, in passing, on the death of *B*, to *C*, is subjected to a tax of  $66\frac{2}{3}$  per cent., — twice as high as that imposed in the first instance; and the entire remainder, on the death of *C*, is absorbed by the State. Thus the principal of *A*'s fortune, with the passing of the second following generation, becomes nationalized. On the supposition that *B* in the course of his life by energy and economy in the handling of his inheritance doubles it, the increment, \$66,666  $\frac{2}{3}$ , most distinctly his own, goes at his death, less the tax,  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent., to *C*, who in turn thriftily doubles what he has received by inheritance. And so the process goes on, with the result that the several successors (they are not necessarily single individuals), are seized of properties as follows:

*B*, \$66,666.66,

*C*, \$66,666.66,

*D*, \$59,259.26,

*E*, \$54,321.99,

*F*, \$49,382.71.

Two or three points of this scheme seem to call for amendment. To old people who have great-grandchildren and love them, it will look like a needless pain to be debarred from handing down to them a little legacy. The defect, if such it is, arises from a too rapidly-climbing inheritance-tax, the rates suggested (to be sure they are only suggested, and open to modification) of  $33\frac{1}{3}$ ,  $66\frac{2}{3}$ , 100 per cent., consuming the heritage before it can reach the great-grandchildren. We note also that the properties coming to the legatee in succession, come diminishing at a rather alarming rate for moderate fortunes, notwithstanding the fact that each recipient is represented as doubling the patrimony falling to him.

DEVELOPMENT AND MODIFICATION OF RIGNANO'S PROPOSAL (A SECTION TO BE PASSED LIGHTLY OVER BY READERS WITH A DISTASTE FOR SYMBOLS AND FORMULÆ)

To remedy what is not quite satisfactory to us in Rignano's development of his scheme, we may venture to amend his work in some particulars. Beside the two defects just mentioned, a more considerable one is, the application of one uniform rate of taxation to all inheritances, large and small. It were more to the socialistic purpose to exempt estates of not more than a few thousand dollars, and also to preserve the progressive feature of most of the existing inheritance-tax laws — progressive as respects the *amount* of the legacies, — combining it with the new

feature of progression in *time*; the tax, that is, increasing at each successive transmission. The combination involves no difficulty, as will be seen, and the advantages to be gained are very great. Social well-being is furthered—for the present at any rate—by the reduction of vast fortunes, by the growth of small ones, and by the maintenance of moderate ones in equilibrium. The best form of inheritance-tax is that which will contribute to all three of these ends. Let us see definitely what can be proposed that will be least open to objection. No finality is to be attempted, only something to clear the way.

Let the progressive percentages of the tax be 30, 60, 90, and 100; so carrying a heritage over to three generations instead of two. If now we represent the amount of the inheritances coming into the hands of *B, C, D, E, F* (five generations), by *b, c, d, e, f*, and the fortune of *A*, at whose death the scheme goes into operation, by *a*, we have, after deducting the 30 per cent. tax,  $b = \frac{7}{10}a$ . On *B*'s death he leaves behind this  $\frac{7}{10}a$ , which, subjected to a tax of 60 per cent, yields to *C*,  $\frac{28}{100}a$ . *B* also leaves his own accumulation, which, following Rignano, we will suppose equals the amount he received from *A*, that is,  $\frac{7}{10}a$ , or *b*. Deducting from this the 30 per cent. inheritance-tax, we have  $\frac{7}{10}b$ , which added to *C*'s  $\frac{28}{100}a$  makes him commence with  $\frac{28}{100}a + \frac{7}{10}b$ . On the death of *C*, his  $\frac{28}{100}a$  is taxed 90 per cent., leaving to *D* out of his great-grandfather's estate  $\frac{28}{1000}a$ . There comes to him from his grandfather (as does the pre-

ceding item, indirectly, through  $C$ ),  $\frac{7}{10}b$ , less the tax of 60 per cent. laid on a second transmission of a legacy, the remainder being  $\frac{28}{100}b$ . Finally there is his father's own accumulation, which by hypothesis equals his inheritance,  $c$ , and which, deducting the 30 per cent. tax, clears up  $\frac{7}{10}c$ . The sum, therefore, of  $D$ 's inheritance, in three symbols indicating its three sources, is  $\frac{28}{1000}a + \frac{28}{100}b + \frac{7}{10}c$ . Continuing this process, the formula for five generations stands:

$$b = \frac{7}{10}a$$

$$c = \frac{28}{100}a + \frac{7}{10}b$$

$$d = \frac{28}{1000}a + \frac{28}{100}b + \frac{7}{10}c$$

$$e = \frac{28}{1000}b + \frac{28}{100}c + \frac{7}{10}d$$

$$f = \frac{28}{1000}c + \frac{28}{100}d + \frac{7}{10}e$$

If now we put  $A$ 's fortune at \$100,000, we have the five successive inheritances (taxes paid) as follows:

$$b = \frac{7}{10}a = \$70,000$$

$$c = \frac{77}{100}a = \$77,000$$

$$d = \frac{763}{1000}a = \$76,300$$

$$e = \frac{7693}{10000}a = \$76,930$$

$$f = \frac{77371}{100000}a = \$77,371$$

It will be observed that this rate of taxation, 30, 60, 90, 100, per cent. on successive inheritances, provides — on the reasonable supposition that each inheritor doubles what falls to him — against the dwindling of an inheritance, which for moderate hold-

ings seems a desirable feature, especially when we consider that in most cases there will be a plurality of immediate heirs, and in the next generation a further increase. It should also be noted that, not to unduly discourage accumulation, the lowest tax in this scheme is laid on that part of a man's property which he has himself amassed. Variation of this particular part of the tax in proportion to the magnitude of the estate, is the chief emendation here offered to Rignano. The rich man's ambition to accumulate may ordinarily be checked without detriment to society, perhaps to its great gain; but not so with the poor man's. It is highly important that there be held out to him every honorable inducement to lay something by, and that he have fair opportunity for doing so. Small estates should be exempt. Properties from the limit of exemption up to \$100,000 might bear the percentages 20, 60, 90, 100. The algebraic formula for these rates is:

$$\begin{aligned} b &= \frac{8a}{10} \\ c &= \frac{32a}{100} + \frac{8b}{10} = \frac{96a}{100} \\ d &= \frac{32a}{1000} + \frac{32b}{100} + \frac{8c}{10} = \frac{1056a}{1000} \\ e &= \frac{32b}{1000} + \frac{32c}{100} + \frac{8d}{10} = \frac{11776a}{10000} \\ f &= \frac{32c}{10000} + \frac{32d}{1000} + \frac{8e}{10} = \frac{131072a}{100000} \end{aligned}$$

If now we put *A*'s fortune at \$10,000, we have the amounts falling to five generations of his descendants, supposing each to double his inheritance: \$8000, \$9600, \$10,560, \$11,776, \$13,107.

For very large fortunes a stronger disintegrating force needs to be applied in the several transmissions, or at least at the beginning. Frankly, one of the main objects being to reduce these fortunes to moderate size, we must not shrink from severity. Considering what a fortune of \$10,000 is made to bear above, a man with \$10,000,000 ought not to object to the series of percentages: 50, 60, 90, 100.\* Taking these figures, for the first five inheritances (doubling as before) we get:

$$\begin{aligned}
 b &= \frac{a}{2} = && \$5,000,000 \\
 c &= \frac{a}{5} + \frac{b}{2} = \frac{45a}{100} = && \$4,500,000 \\
 d &= \frac{a}{50} + \frac{b}{5} + \frac{c}{2} = \frac{345a}{1000} = && \$3,450,000 \\
 e &= \frac{b}{50} + \frac{c}{5} + \frac{d}{2} = \frac{2725a}{10000} = && \$2,725,000 \\
 f &= \frac{c}{50} + \frac{d}{5} + \frac{e}{2} = \frac{21425a}{100000} = && \$2,142,500
 \end{aligned}$$

There would be of course practical difficulties in carrying into effect such an inheritance-tax. No great

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\* Since the writing of this chapter a declaration made by Mr. Andrew Carnegie at a dinner given in his honor at Los Angeles has appeared which is of interest in this connection as bringing to the initial tax here proposed, high as it is, the corroboration of a very rich man. His words as reported were: "I do not believe in an income-tax. My plan is simpler and better. An income-tax would make a nation of liars. Let men make all the money they can in their lifetime, *but when they die let the State take half of it.* That is a pretty good dividend."

Not long since, the French Chamber would have made the inheritance-tax 50 per cent. where there is but one heir in direct line, and 20 per cent. where there are only two or three such heirs; but the Senate refused to concur.



thing is accomplished without effort. To avoid the dissipation of a legacy under the new circumstances it may be necessary to limit the title to a life use of the property, under security to keep the principal intact. There would have to be provision by which large conveyances as gifts, effected in the lifetime of the giver, should come under the same tax as a bequest. These, however, are matters of procedure, and not beyond the ingenuity of law-makers.

#### COLLECTIVE IN LIEU OF PRIVATE CAPITAL

The adoption of such a plan means vast accumulation of property in the hands of the State, and so the tax is to be contradistinguished from all ordinary taxation. Ordinary taxes are for the current expenses of government, and are expected to be entirely disbursed year by year. Not so with this. No part of the inheritance-tax here proposed (beyond the expenses of the bureau of administration of the new Department of Industry) is ever to pass out of the hands of the State. Not a dollar of it is ever to go to help make up a deficit, to the building of warships, fortresses, palaces. The dissipation of this sacred trust in any such manner would be the impoverishment and ruin of the nation. The wealth of the nation is to be in no slightest degree lessened by the operation of this tax; it is simply to be, in a considerable measure and by easy stages, transferred from individuals to the collectivity. It is to remain capital, but *public* capital, to be managed by guardians appointed by the government. These guardians

will naturally be the very men (or men of their type) who are now conducting great enterprises, men who have extraordinary faculty for affairs. For this reason, and because the change will come gradually, no business shock will be produced; everything will go on — for the time — much as before; people generally will find themselves doing the same work, — only they will feel that they have been delivered from a devouring greed in them and around them, from the hideous dilemma which forces a choice between swallowing and being swallowed by their rivals.

The intent is to change the State in its essential character from an almost purely political to a predominantly industrial institution; and at the same time, by the same measure of gradually withdrawing capital from private hands, to check the growth of a plutocracy; — or, rather, to draw the life-blood of the monster, which now lifts its Gorgon head beside the government nominally representative, dictating more or less the laws, and threatening, as its billions multiply, to rule the country absolutely, while, perhaps, leaving the people the empty appearance of ruling.

Some such inheritance-tax as that above outlined seems the only means of peacefully saving the liberties of the people and placing them on a substantial basis. Here and there a multi-millionaire begins to show signs of feeling that he and his class are a menace to the Republic; is actually taking steps to reduce his fortune to less alarming proportions. The

socialist State would do this with more wisdom. It would go slowly, do no harm to the rich, make no gifts to the poor. In one hundred and fifty years or so there would be quite a falling off in the number of millionaires without any reduction of the wealth of the country. That wealth, on the contrary, would presumably go on increasing more rapidly than ever under the stimulation to industry given by the new order as by this process it comes gradually into operation.

"Childish prattle, all this," we shall hear it said; "another unrealizable poor-man's Utopia!" And, indeed, this so great advance is not going to be made at a bound; there are too many obstacles in the way. But it will be made little by little, and at an accelerating pace, if we may judge of the future by the past. In the meantime let it be observed, there is nothing in this proposal but that is amply justified in principle by existing inheritance-tax laws; nothing in it but that is eminently for the public weal; nothing to strike any rational mind capable of comprehending it and not hopelessly blinded by self-interest, as other than just, wise, and beneficent. And it is not unrealizable; it waits only on the will of the people.

The first to turn the scale of opinion are likely to be certain of the thoughtful rich who are finding the task of satisfactorily disposing of their millions as difficult as was the acquisition, and who will be ready to approve the course above outlined when they once see that, of all the beneficences to which

the wealth of a nation can be applied, socializing the instruments of industry is the greatest, and that in no thinkable way other than that here indicated (short of flat confiscation) is this thing to be accomplished. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that these principles be brought home to the minds of all the people; not merely to those who may be said to have the most obvious interest in them, who are the ones directly to benefit from their application, but to others as well; to the people of great possessions and great hearts too, who feel as keenly as the rest of us that there is something wrong in the arrangements of a world where the bounties fall so exclusively to one class, and the burdens to another.

Perhaps the main obstacle to even the consideration of these plans is lack of confidence in the State as the depositary of such great trusts and conductor of such vast enterprises. We have seen so much corruption in municipal and State governments that we shrink from enlarging for our magistrates their already too great opportunities for villainy. But this sad and hideously frequent spectacle is the legitimate outcome of the existing social order, which operates to put a premium on fraud and excites cupidity to the danger point by all manner of inticements. We cannot too soon move away from it. Happily there is more honor in national governments, and their probity strengthens with the growth of their responsibilities; they become purified as they concern themselves with the development of multifarious internal affairs.

From some enlargement of the inheritance-tax, if at all, is to come that extensive nationalization of property which will enable the State to acquire possession—in ways that wisdom born of wider experience shall approve—of the instruments of production, and transform itself beneficently into an industrial organization, becoming a new and innocent, yet most efficient sort of trust, one to use the great advantages of a practical monopoly, not for any private, personal end, but for the enrichment of the whole people, for that equalization of opportunity, that just reward of toil, whether of the hand or of the head, which are the fair fulfilment of the democratic idea.

A long-suffering people's redemption awaits the will of the people themselves. When they shall have learned that, since they—the proletariat—are the great majority they have but to stand together and pull together, the hour of their deliverance will have struck. This is in theory so simple a proposition, so self-evident, that one wonders it should be so slow in taking effect. Marx' call: "Proletarians, unite!" should, one would think, have been promptly responded to by hundreds of millions, so clear is it that they have a common interest, and so obviously sound is the maxim, "In union there is strength." But in reality the union of this great body of people, the awakening in them of the consciousness that they *are* a body, has been found difficult of accomplishment. For it means not only that they be brought

to perceive the ends to be reached, but also that they acquire confidence in one another, develop a class feeling, a fellowship of suffering and of protest, an *esprit du corps* which shall subordinate immediate personal interest to the interest of all; and this is not the work of a day. Happily the process involves the discipline that fits for responsibilities. The terror of the civilized ages has been the possible sudden rising, at the beck of a demagogue, of a multitudinous, irresponsible rabble, putting an end to the old order, turning the world upside down. Latin America has been the latest theater of these operations, and has shown the world how fruitless of good are revolutions precipitated by the ignorant and the reckless. The proletariat coming slowly to a consciousness of their power when united, coming to it through long experience of struggle and discipline, there can be no doubt that when their hour of triumph arrives, as arrive it must, they will have attained such a sense of responsibility in the use of that power, such a measure of wisdom in administration, as will insure just, dispassionate, humane action. Already where socialists are a veritable political force, they have shown themselves the party of conscience, of intelligence, of reform, cleaning up the slums of cities, bringing in good municipal government, opposing war and preparation for war, while patiently biding their time. \*

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\* Hunter, *Socialists at Work*, pp. 30, 323.

## THE WORK BEFORE US

The immediate and pressing task, therefore, is the development of a political organization which shall be the conscious expression of unity, and which, placing here and there a socialist in office, shall command for the body a due measure of respect. Imagine the consequences in this country if the socialist party had the votes of one-half or even of one-fourth of the working-men, and in Congress, say, one hundred members, with the prospect at the next election of doubling that number. In how different a position would labor be! Instead of sporadic strikes, resulting commonly in failure and in heavy losses, — confronting as they do the frowns of an inconvenienced public, the massive hostility of capital, and the authority of an unsympathetic government, — there would be brought to bear a pressure from above compelling consideration of the demands of the workers and fair arbitration of their case, — the poor devils no longer left to the despairing resort of hurling brick-bats, firing trams, blowing up buildings, or otherwise breaking the peace.

What are commonly known as political questions — tariffs, suffrage, home-rule, form of government even — are not half as important as simple social justice; but everywhere save in Russia there is deep feeling over them, intense excitement as the elections come on, party lines rigidly drawn. Why should the gravest matter of all be so left out of sight, creating



scarcely a ripple on the sea of politics? How is it that in respect of labor, and labor alone, we are so thoroughly Russianized, so lacking in political organization, so unrepresented in the government, so torpid at the polls? We must own that at this point we are fresh and raw, and have much to learn from other countries, particularly from Germany and France.

Right bracing at this time comes what, let us hope, will be the beginning of another outlook for socialism, its first political victory in a great American city. At the Milwaukee municipal election of April 5, 1910, the Social Democracy polled 27,622 votes, almost as many as both the great parties combined, capturing the city government. The party platform on which this triumph was achieved puts forward as ends to be attained such an array of social-welfare provisions as to bring cheer to the hearts of the people and confusion to the faces of old-line politicians all up and down the land. It includes the initiative and referendum; improvement of the public schools; penny lunches; trades-union conditions of labor; compulsory sprinkling of their streets by street-car companies; a seat for every passenger in street cars, and three-cent fare; eight-hour day for labor; cheaper gas; municipal plant to reduce the price of ice; municipal coal and wood yard to reduce the price of fuel; municipal lighting-plant to make more light at less cost; extraction from corporations of their full share of the taxes; street closets and comfort-stations; work for the unemployed at union wages;

widows who do washing for the support of families to have water-rates remitted by the city; standard weight of bread in every loaf. The socialist mayor proposes that the new government accomplish all this and much more. Celebrating the victory, he rose to these high sentiments: "Our task is to take this, our city, and make of it a home — a real home — for its hundreds of thousands of men and women and children; a place where there is little room for tears and heartaches; a place where our boys can become men and our daughters women; a place where virtue is protected, a place where the strong stand for the weak, holding their hands over the heads of the weak, shielding them from all harm. Ours is the task of realizing the dreams of the great men of the past."

Still more important than getting control of the government of a great city, is the extraordinary increase of the socialist vote in the various States in the election of November 8, 1910, the crowning feature of which was the placing of fourteen socialists in the Wisconsin legislature, and one, Mr. Victor L. Berger, in the Congress of the United States. This really looks like beginning a new era.

During the interval between the two significant elections which have just been noted, President Taft declared the next great political issue to be the problem presented by socialism, "that problem than which we have had none greater in the history of the country."

## CHAPTER V

### SOCIALISM INTERNATIONAL

A perfectly valid objection to an inheritance-tax law drawn to embody the principle advocated in the preceding chapter, is this: the effect of such action, taken by one country alone, would be large withdrawal of capital to other countries. Such a consequence not even a convinced socialist legislature could confront with equanimity. Evidently, drastic legislation of this sort can be practicable only when the leading nations generally are ready to adopt it. Just as it was found in the time of Owen and Considérant that socialism could not be successfully inaugurated by isolated communities in the midst of a population following the old order, so would it be now with any attempt of this or that State to take over even by slow degrees the wealth of dead men, by means of it to socialize the instruments of production, while the rest of the nations keep to the old ways. The individuals in whose hands capital is aggregated are not going to look on quietly and see the State turned into an industrial rival of theirs, another and mightier capitalist; they are going to resist any such movement, and resist it the more furiously because of the pledge that this new capitalist is not to exploit but to emancipate the workers, deliver them from the odious wage system, and make

them the owners of whatever they produce. Private capital, if it cannot prevent so grave a catastrophe (to itself), will fly the country which, without concert with other countries, enters upon such a course. Not all forms of capital are thus mobile, but so much of it is, that no one country can afford to bear down upon it greatly more than do other countries.

Socialism, therefore, is not going to be realized — as a new religion, or free trade, or universal suffrage, might be — first in one country, and later, when it has been fully tried and approved there, adopted elsewhere. On account of the nature of one of the elements it has to deal with, and its relation to that element, it cannot be tested experimentally on a small scale to see how it will work. To find that out experientially we must await its adoption, so manifestly approaching, in all the leading countries.

Moreover, this universality is in the nature of the movement itself. In all lands, under all forms of government, the social question is the same; the same classes exist, arrayed one against the other; the same crushing pressure of the industrial system bears upon the wage-earners. There is, therefore, between the working-men of different countries a strong bond of sympathy, coming from the experience of like hardships and the suffering of like wrongs, from feeling the same longings and asserting the same claims. Go where the American socialist will in the civilized world, he is at home among socialists; the common sentiments and interests that link him with them are strong enough to override distinctions of language,

nationality, race, and give the sense of a new sort of citizenship, one which halts at no frontier, and whose unfailing watchword is Social Justice. A world-wide fellowship is found actually to subsist, resting on common vital interests and on that convergence of thought which is induced by similar experiences.

#### THE INTERNATIONAL

In 1862 the workmen of France sent a deputation to visit the International Exhibition at London. The members in the course of their stay were entertained one evening by some English workmen, and views on the subjects most nearly touching them all were freely exchanged. Visitors and hosts, the sons and daughters of traditional enemies, discovered then and there that they were closely akin, having identical interests, aims, ideas; were in fact so drawn together that the following year a second deputation of French workmen came over to the Exhibition, and renewed the happy fellowship with their British brothers. The result was the calling in 1864 of a great meeting of the working-men of all nations to be held in London on the 28th of September. Of that meeting the outcome was the formation of The International Association of Working-men, or, as it came to be called, The International, — the most famed society and the most feared that was ever constituted out of representatives of different peoples. A committee of fifty, which included Mazzini, Karl Marx, and other no-

tables, was selected to draw up a constitution. The work finally fell to Marx, and the form of constitution produced by him and adopted by the committee, remains one of the monuments of his greatness. It was to be passed upon by the Association the following year. To emphasize the international character of the body, it was proposed to hold the meeting on the continent, and Brussels was chosen as the place. But the Belgian government refused its permission, and the General Council, provisionally created by the committee, could arrange for nothing more than a conference in London. The first congress went over to the following year, when, republican Switzerland making no objection, it was held at Geneva in September, 1866. The constitution presented by Marx was adopted, and the working-men of the world had a veritable organization, which in its brief career did great things for the class it represented, and made a tremendous impression upon other classes. Any lack of harmony in the membership arose, not from racial or national distinctions, but from tactical preferences due to the different circumstances and conditions in which their socialism had come to consciousness and to the differing stages of its development here and there. As far as nationality was concerned, the more unexpected and strange the delegation that sought admission, the heartier the welcome accorded. The very contrast in the appearance of the members, their difference of dress, of color, and of speech, gave piquancy and strength to the

assemblies; was evidence that here at last was a world-movement set on foot by a universal need, making toward a common end, the importance of which was attested by the vigor of the utterances in many tongues—heard and understood as on the day of Pentecost; by the breathless attention paid on the spot, and, in differing moods, as the utterances went reverberating round the world. Nothing of the kind had been known since the crumbling of the church began under the blows of the Reformers. Nor has any such series of manifestations accompanied, to this day, the growth of any other cause. “World’s Conventions” of one sort and another are projected from time to time by this and that coterie, but they all lack the universality, the vital interest, the practical significance, characterizing the annual gatherings of the old International and the later International Congresses of the socialists,—are rather in the nature of curiosities, attractions devised to accompany and help out an Exposition; assemblies like the Parliament of Religions, arranged for an occasion, having no deep, general, controlling interest, the participants representing nothing, their performance amounting to little more than a momentary truce in the war they habitually wage upon one another.

If a convention of some one of the trades—that is, of the operators, not the operatives—gets together, the aim is of the narrowest. If the doors are not closed and you venture in, you listen in vain for any universal sentiment, any word having a human



interest. The speakers frankly indicate that the body is actuated by purely selfish motives; more concerned to get an advantage, no matter by what means, over foreign manufacturers, than to improve the home product; anxious chiefly to keep more than a minimum of the profits from getting into the hands of the real producers. Almost all associated effort in whatever direction is restricted to the country where it springs up, and if not hostile, is indifferent to like effort in other countries; or if it extends its work benevolently beyond the national boundaries, as do the foreign missionary societies, the object is not to fraternize with but to destroy any form of religion that may exist there. But socialism is nothing if not international. It has no aim which is not for the benefit alike of every people under the sun. In all lands it has the same message, and it draws peoples the most diverse into fellowship and brotherhood. It is the one party which everywhere stands for peace between the nations; in which attitude it is, perhaps, not altogether disinterested, for, as is well known, the class from which the party is mainly drawn, that is, the working-men, — the men who have not money to hire substitutes, or at any rate could only hire others of their class, — are the ones who must make up the rank and file of armies, face the music of the belching guns, strew the battlefields with their corpses. But that is not all. Socialists have come to see that the opposing army is in the main conscripted from the same class, brothers of the same fellowship of toil, having no more grounds of enmity

than themselves, and who, like themselves, are turned into machines to stand up and shoot their brothers, and by their brothers to be shot. This is not nice, and socialists are saying so. When less numerous than they now are they exerted themselves to the utmost to prevent the Franco-Prussian war; and they are at present, as they ever have been, the chief influence in every land making for peace. It is their doctrine that takes down the barriers between nations, and reveals to astonished mortals the fact that being born on one side of an arbitrary line is under no circumstances adequate ground of hostility toward those born on the other side.

#### PATRIOTISM BELITTLED BY EXAGGERATION

When one marks the readiness of millions to forsake the land of their birth for new, strange regions over seas, and the facility with which they make themselves at home there, the apparent heartiness of the fresh fealty, one is led to think there has been some exaggeration of the attachment people really feel for their native land. It is something, but it is in general no such absorbing passion as poets and sophomoric orators have told us. Hervé and his following among the French socialists go so far as to denounce patriotism as a mistaken, unnatural sentiment worked up by designing men, dividing the world into fragments mutually hostile, precipitating wars in the interest of dynasties and seekers of fortune. But to say all that, is to take a distorted view. There is

a patriotism which consists perfectly with peace and good-will to all mankind. Love of home and labor for its welfare, love of one's city, province, State, and effort to embellish, improve and upbuild them, — what can be more admirable? We cannot spread our little selves over the whole world, small as the world is getting to be; the service we render tells, if at all, only on a very moderate area. For this among other reasons the smaller communities, the realms of antiquity and of later time which were but cities, have been able to boast the most ardent devotion to their interests on the part of their citizens. Indeed the advantage to a nation of a compact and limited territory with a homogeneous population is so great that in Europe it largely offsets the cost, terrible as it has been and is, of the political rivalry which has grown out of the division and subdivision of the continent. Unfortunately it has been customary to cite examples of patriotism almost wholly from war times, as though death-dealing and hell-making were its business and its glorious opportunity. Looking at the subject from that point of view, no wonder that good men are questioning, are denying, in fact, the right of patriotism to be called a virtue. There is, however, another and a larger outlook. In the service of one's country for which peace affords the unlimited opportunity, eminently in work for the preservation of peace, is a patriotism displayed outshining all that was ever done in war.

And it is right here that socialism seems destined

to accomplish one of its chief beneficences: it will so knit the nations together in the bonds of a common sympathy, so abolish the occasions of political and commercial strife, that war will be no more, and preparation for war no longer drain the resources of the world in time of peace. Already in Germany where socialism is, more than elsewhere, a political force, it raises its voice against a dominant, menacing militarism; and in the Reichstag, where sit a large body of Clericals professing to honor the "Prince of Peace," it is the only party that attempts to stay the barbaric and unholy craze which is steadily impoverishing the nation in lavish offerings to the god of war. And it is worth noting that this stand for peace is taken on high, humanitarian grounds: to save *people* from the horrors of war, from its physical perils, its mental agonies, and the moral debasement of wholesale murder. The waste of treasure does not so directly touch the working-men.

This attitude of the party is well illustrated by an incident reported of the Amsterdam congress of 1904. The Russo-Japanese war was at its height, and the two countries were each represented by a delegate. As the venerable Van Kol in his address of welcome to the city spoke of this, and praised the socialists of both countries for being represented there under the circumstances, and for their moral courage in discountenancing the war from first to last, Katyama, the Japanese, and Plechanoff, the Russian delegate, by simultaneous impulse rose and grasped hands in such cordial fellowship that the

whole assembly sprang to their feet and broke into thunders of applause, acclaiming in many tongues the mute eloquence of that sign of good-will.

#### UNIVERSALITY OF SOCIALIST IDEAS

The socialist party differs from other parties, as socialism differs from other systems, in having its quality of universality. Here in America at present we have the two great parties, the Republican and the Democratic; but one is as republican, as democratic, as the other. The names as applied have no distinguishing significance. As little have these parties any universal principles linking them to political parties elsewhere with which they might meet and fraternize. Their platforms have at most only a national interest. And as with our great parties, so with the Liberal and Conservative or Unionist parties in Great Britain. There can no more be an international congress of Liberals or Conservatives than there can be one of Republicans or Democrats. Whatever local importance any distinctive contention of either one of these parties may have, it has no universal interest drawing together for its advocacy or discussion delegated representatives of many nations. Their contrast with socialism in this respect is most marked. Whatever the socialists in Germany, in France, in Belgium, in Italy, say or do is of equal interest to socialists in every land. And this for the reason that the basic principles of their system have been drawn from the experience and the wisdom of all the foremost peoples. They are

in no sense provincial; they have originated in no one country exclusively. Socialism in its present form is often considered a German product because Marx was a German by birth. But Marx was early exiled from Germany; he drew his socialistic inspiration first from great French thinkers; he did his chief work in the long and fruitful years of his residence in London, his mind saturated with English economic history. In fact this system of thought as it stands is of no one man and of no one people; it is the evolutionary outcome of universal human struggle, the manifold, unified contribution of many nationalities. And, as it is a world product, it concerns the whole world. As Hunter has well said: "If the French have contributed to socialism a wealth of ideas, and the English an impressive instance of the inevitable antagonism of the workers to capitalism, the Germans have contributed something equally important. They have combined the idea and the practice. Without the instinctive idealism of the French, or the instinctive practice of the English, they are both doctrinaire and practical. The Germans were the first to build up a political movement of the workers founded upon the doctrines and philosophy of socialism. They put into the concrete the socialist views of Marx, and made out of a doctrine a powerful living reality. Combining the practical and the abstract, the methodical and scientific Germans have given an example to the world of working-class unity and solidarity. Without French thought, Marx could not have produced the fundamental doctrines of modern

socialism; without a knowledge of English labor organization it is doubtful if he could have perceived so clearly the capacity of the working-class for organized and consistent action; and without the gift of the Germans for combining the idea and the practice, modern socialism could not have reached its present position of having a conscious aim, a simple and precise doctrine, and an organized practical movement." \* Hence it is that the writings of socialists in one country are good in all countries; and anywhere, for purposes of propaganda, the work of a foreigner may be just as effective as the work of a native.

#### INTERNATIONAL CONGRESSES

Under these circumstances it was inevitable that socialists of different countries should get in the way of meeting together for discussion of grave questions, for mutual counsel and encouragement. When the stormy times of the old International had passed, and anarchism, the chief disturbing factor, had been discountenanced; when enmities provoked by the Franco-German war had in a measure subsided, need was felt of somehow giving expression to the socialist universalism. So it was arranged to hold a general congress at Paris in 1889. Responses to the invitation were gratifying, and nearly four hundred delegates, hailing from twenty different countries, assembled in the city ever-fair, whose battle-scars were disappearing, whose young trees were pushing for-

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\* *Socialists at Work*, p. 317.



ward to give some hint of the grateful shade cast by the old ones sacrificed in extremity for fuel. So profitable was the gathering that a second congress was held, at Brussels, in 1891, at which delegates appeared not only from every European country, but also from America and from Australia. A yet more imposing attendance marked the third congress, which assembled at Zürich in 1893. The fourth international congress, held in London in 1896, was notable for a last struggle with the anarchists, who were among the delegates in some force, and who were seeking to divert the movement into violent revolutionary courses. After full deliberation it was decided by overwhelming vote to exclude them from the membership. This took out a very lively, if also a troublesome, element, and was one occasion perhaps, of the lack of interest shown in the next congress, held in 1900. But the interest fully revived at the sixth, at Amsterdam in 1904. Indeed this meeting outdid in significance all that went before, being distinguished by the great debate over an issue that had been raised by a group of "revisionists" in Germany, whose views were favored by a considerable portion, if not a majority, of the party in France, touching the propriety of socialists entering into alliances with other political parties and accepting (should it offer) a cabinet office. This remarkable debate has already been spoken of,\* and need not be dwelt upon here. Suffice it to say the revisionists were worsted, which signified little

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\* Chapter III.

for Germany, where they are only a small minority, but much for France, where disagreement over the question had threatened disruption of the party. Never in political history was deference to an international assembly, clothed with only moral authority, so pronounced as that shown by the French delegates there present and by their constituents at home in accepting the verdict of the congress as final — final at any rate till such time as haply some future congress shall reverse it.

The seventh congress, held at Stuttgart in 1907, drew a larger number of delegates than any of the preceding. All Europe, several of the American republics, far Australia, Japan, and India were represented — in all some thirty nations. The delegates numbered about one thousand, among them many persons holding exalted positions at home. Ten per cent. of them were members of one or another parliament. There were professors, authors, artists; many labor-leaders; all men of independent thinking. That differences on some questions of policy developed in such a large and heterogeneous assembly is not surprising; it was inevitable. The wonder is that there could be got together from every continent and from the isles of the sea such a body for deliberation over matters that promised no one of them a cent, and that they should sit in conference for a week. What other political organizations are there that could bring about anything of the kind? But differ as they might on secondary matters, these socialists of thirty nationalities, of diverse races, of all classes

and all colors were at one on fundamental principles, and the spectacle of such a body of unlike personalities fused by the fire of a common great devotion, aspiring, toiling for the realization of a common hope, must have seemed worth the longest journey to the spot.

These fraternal assemblages out of nations armed to the teeth, equipped for slaughter with all that science can devise, all that unlimited resources can procure, are a lesson for the present and a prophecy of things to come. They signally show how work for social justice overcomes the crude instinctive repugnance produced in us by every sort of strangeness in our fellows, and substitutes for that unthinking impulse the elevated sentiment of reasoned human brotherliness. They betoken a veritable international parliament which in the—let us hope—not distant future when the mutual respect of the peoples shall have further grown, when implements of warfare shall begin to look barbaric beside the implements of industry, and along all frontiers begin to give place to the emblems of generous service, will meet every year, or sit in permanence, now here, now there, and, with the authority conferred upon it, propose to the various governments such legislation touching foreign relations as will confirm and perpetuate the reign of peace.

## CHAPTER VI

### PROSPECTS OF SOCIALISM ON MATERIALISTIC FOUNDATIONS

Marx and Engels set forth a theory of materialistic determination in history which is, as all must agree, a notable contribution to the world's thought. They were both Germans, and Engels himself, referring to the characteristics of the German mind, said: "Whenever any one of us expounds what he considers a new doctrine, he has first to elaborate it into an all-comprising system." So we have these two eminently philosophic minds undertaking to show that all movements in the human world, political, social, intellectual, or other, are determined by economic causes; that is, by the supply of food, the conditions of labor, the mechanism of production and exchange. They take us over the social transitions of these later centuries, and point out with clearness and irresistible force the operation of these causes in every case. They show us how in the middle ages a class developed between lord and lackey which by sturdy industry and plodding thrift got enough to eat and something more, handicraftsmen and small traders, becoming in course of time powerful enough to suppress the feudal barons and set up a new order of things. Petty were the industries in those days, but the workers had a distinct independence which their successors in modern times

may well envy. Production went on slowly, everything being done by hand. The producers worked generally each on his own account, the mechanic, the artisan, owning his own shop and tools, doing, with his family and perhaps an apprentice, his own work; the farmer, in like isolation, tilling his own glebe. Few worked for wages, as it was usually quite possible for a workman to set up for himself, so insignificant was the outlay. In towns where manufacture was stimulated by readier exchange the shops were larger, a master-workman having with him perhaps half-a-dozen apprentices and journeymen—the guild regulations rigidly restricted the number—whose employment in the shop, however, if more than temporary, commonly assumed a form of co-operation. The cases where men worked their life long for wages were comparatively rare, so that no great class of the kind came into existence. The mass of the rural population maintained a rude but independent existence in isolated families, producing substantially all the necessities of their simple life by their own handiwork, growing their own edibles, weaving their own cloth from the wool of their own sheep, making their own clothes, and even the implements with which they did their work. The industries of the cities were but extensions and specializations of the same method of hand-work, a shop taking up some specific branch of production, the owner obtaining his other necessities by exchange. Production under such circumstances was of course very limited in amount, and

equally limited was demand for the product. The characteristic feature of industry throughout that long period, contrasting it sharply with what has supervened, was, that the shop, the tools, the raw material and the completed product were in the hands of the worker, were his undivided property. If the manufacturer (the word in that day had only its strict etymological sense) hired a few hands, he worked with them at the same bench, and they could when they pleased set up a rival shop. He had as little resemblance to the modern capitalist as an acorn has to an oak.

INDUSTRIAL EVOLUTION IN THE LATTER HALF OF  
THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Into this quiet, humdrum, circumscribed world of industry came the machine, ingeniously contrived to do, and with astounding rapidity, what had always before been laboriously done by hand, — the spinning-machine, the power-loom, the steam-hammer, — working social results more sweeping than were ever seen before. The cheaper, more efficient mode of production soon made the old mode obsolete, with consequences the most serious to the hand-workers. The machine was costly, beyond the means of the individual craftsman; besides, it could not be profitably adapted to the uses of a small shop. For its successful application there had to be a great factory, employing a hundred or a thousand hands. It compelled, therefore, a change from individualized to

collective industry; and this called for the investment of large capital. Had governments then been wise enough to take the matter in hand in the interest of the toilers, all might have been well; but they were busy with things of less import. Private capital seized upon the opportunity to multiply itself; built the mills, filled them with machinery, stocked them with raw material. Thither then came the thousands of petty producers whose business the machine had ruined, glad to be taken in at any price as wage-earners; renouncing in the soreness of their distress their shops, their homes, their birthright of independence, for a mess of pottage. As the factories multiplied, the applicants for employment in them multiplied, and much more rapidly, greatly aggravating the situation. The dispossessed of their means of livelihood were far in excess of the needs of the factories, as one hundred hands with machines sufficed for the work that thousands did in the old way; so there was left over in reserve a large force of needy, starving people, men, women, and children, who in their dire extremity became competitors for the places of those who were employed, dragging the rate of wages down yet lower.

Such in brief were the circumstances accompanying the creation of a practically new class, the proletariat, the wage-earners; new, because down to that epoch few worked for wages, and they generally for only a part of the time, having for a main reliance something of their own to do.



Thus there grew up, first in manufacturing centers, a great class wholly dependent on the capitalists, and in such straits as to be compelled to accept the pay offered them, which by economic law was the least on which they could subsist. The oppression to which they were subjected, the intolerably long hours of labor, not only for men, but for women, and for children of tender age—all that has been told over and over, and is something appalling to think upon. Under the rule of free competition a premium was put upon inhumanity, they who practiced it prospering most. The kindest employer could shorten the hours and lessen the pressure only at a financial loss as compared with his rivals, and so the system made cruel taskmasters of good men. When government was asked to interfere, the pretense was set up that the business under State supervision would be unable to compete with foreign manufacture not so hampered. So in England, though the great manufacture was yielding the capitalist owners an enormous profit, they managed to block for forty or fifty years legislation intended to protect the operatives from outrageous oppression. Through all that time the economic laws applying to the situation were controlling, and all that philanthropic sentiment could say or do went for little. Undeniably, a distinctly material thing, a thing of iron and steel, had revolutionized industry, created a new class, and radically changed the constitution of society.

It was an evolution accompanied by pain and

misery, but bringing withal immediate results of vast importance, leading on to a wonderful mastery of natural forces whose subjection to human uses has, as by magic, transformed the external world; an evolution working blindly, and so effecting a haphazard, one-sided advance, whose mainspring, being material, makes the movement itself also conspicuously materialistic. The change from individualized to collective industry, taken apart from the then distressing circumstances, was a great step forward; and, combined with the use of machinery, has been the means of multiplying thousand-fold the world's productive capability. But while the highest human intelligence has been applied to the special processes, the general drift has been unintelligent, abandoned to the motives of self-interest, strewing the course of a gilded, even glorious, progress with countless wrecks of humanity. The study of this period which began so recently that the lives of some of us reach back over the greater part of it, may be made exhaustively with reference to the subject in hand, every step in the movement discerned and pointed out with precision.

Marx has brilliantly shown how from the first massing of labor under capitalist control the owner of the factory has appropriated the lion's share of the product of the operatives. He has paid them something, to be sure, but it has been the least possible, and what is more, the amount paid them has borne no slightest relation to the value of what

they have produced. They who under the previous order of things themselves owned what they made, found themselves all at once without the least shadow of interest in what their hands fabricated. The product, swollen to the utmost, was put upon the market, became a commodity. The enormously increased facilities of production, when once this system was in full swing, filled to repletion the store-houses, and made the sale of the goods a task at times rivaling in magnitude the work of production itself. The whole world had to be ransacked for markets, governments lending their assistance, even waging wars to open avenues of trade. But when all was done to find consumers, the zeal of the mill-owners to swell their output, and so their income, all unchecked by precise knowledge either of the world's demand or of its supply, would overdo the business; whereupon a glut in the market, an industrial and financial crisis dropping like a pall over the land. Mills would close down, the army of operatives be left with nothing to do, and shortly with nothing to eat.

The crisis meant disaster to employer as well as to the people employed, and often swept away his fortune. Its comings are by no means over, though, like some of the comets, it has an irregular period—circumstance which only adds to the apprehension it inspires. It is recognized as a kind of universal catastrophe, to be avoided, or at least postponed, at any cost. In every land society and the State are

always more or less concerned about it, and there is a general scramble of the producing nations for the world's markets not yet monopolized, and by hook or by crook to crowd in where there seems to be no room.

#### FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITALISM

Meanwhile machinery is perfected more and more, steadily approaching the ideal of working automatically, with the result that the proportion of operatives to output is getting ever less, making it increasingly hard, particularly in the more developed countries, for workmen to find work. So, as Marx put it, "machinery becomes the most powerful weapon in the war of capital upon the working-class; the instruments of labor constantly tear the means of subsistence out of the hands of the laborer; the very product of the worker is turned into an instrument for his subjugation." This means, not that machinery is a bad thing, but that there is a conflict between the social interest and the capitalistic interest, becoming ever more intense, more deadly.

A phase of this conflict is seen in the fact that, though there is much enforced idleness in the cities, arising from lack of enough work to go around, the overwork of those who are employed, and the work of little children where law permits it, go on as ruthlessly as ever. The thirst for profits, and large profits, is the capitalist's ruling passion, not to be thwarted by any merely humane sentiment. The army of the unemployed and the reserve of strike-breakers

—these out of ill-will toward their own class and those against their will—are his recourse and his defense.

The competition of laborers with one another proves a very difficult thing to prevent, so multitudinous are they, so pressing often are their needs. The labor-unions, to be perfectly efficient, need to include an overwhelming majority of the workers, and to this preponderance they have not been able to come. On the other hand the competition of capitalists with one another, depended on by the old economists as a means of keeping prices down to a reasonable figure, and fortunes from becoming excessively large, has been found, in the most important lines of business at least, easy enough to abolish, and that, too, by a proceeding which tremendously augments the capitalists' power over the people and over the government—proceeding which is a further venture in collectivity, that idea in its complete application so dear to the socialist heart. They combine and form the trust. As at the inception of the present industrial epoch they took advantage of circumstances to force a collectivity of *labor* in their own interest, now at the last, in the same interest, we see adopted on an immense scale collectivity of *capital*.

The trust, in any line of production or exchange, destroys competition with itself, first, and so long as the laws permit, by direct assault upon the comparatively insignificant individual rival, invading his territory, and by extreme abasement of prices snatching his business out of his hands until he is

left with only the choice between ruin and absorption in the monopoly; or, such a course becoming illegal, accomplishes the same end more deliberately and with entire honor through the advantage which greatly superior resources give. Somewhat as the factory system at its inception stood to the hand-worker in his little shop, stands now the trust to the individual capitalist; it tends steadily and strongly to force him into its connection, albeit on better terms than the hand-workers were received into the factories.

THE EXPECTED OUTCOME THROUGH THE OPERATION  
OF ECONOMIC LAW

All this development of the capitalistic system and its relation to labor, Engels traced through the century and a quarter of its reign, and expounded on the theory "that the production of the means to support human life and, next to production, the exchange of things produced, is the basis of all social structure; that in every society that has appeared in history, the manner in which wealth is distributed and society divided into classes or orders, is dependent on what is produced, how it is produced, and how the products are exchanged"; and therefore that "the final causes of all social changes are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in man's better insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange." That this theory of the all-importance of economic causes—in other statements of it expressly made to overtop political, religious, and all other springs of action affecting society—

has been pushed too far and worked too hard, is now coming to be seen.\* As these economic causes have operated and in the measure that they have dominated, they will continue to operate and dominate. Having traced capitalistic development to its culmination in the trusts, the Marxists have held that the process would not be arrested at this point, but necessarily and within a brief period go on to a yet more complete and unitary concentration in the hands of the State, remodeled to represent industrially the whole people. Engels thought he saw this consummation in the near future, and says with emphasis and as though the fact were here present: "*The proletariat seizes political power and turns the means of production into State property.*" Apparently something was left out of the calculation, for, as in the case of other predictions of the end of an existing order of things, the event does not come off — shows no sign of coming off in our day; believers mark with sighing the non-fulfilment of the promise, and

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\* Thus Professor Anton Menger of Vienna: "It is wholly arbitrary in Marx and the Marxists to see in religion and in the State only the effects of economic conditions. . . . Religion in ancient times played everywhere a decisive rôle, and to-day the State exercises on economy an influence infinitely greater than the inverse influence of economy upon the State. In the nineteenth century the jealousy of the houses of Hapsburg, of Hohenzollern, of Bonaparte, that is to say, a factor purely political, was, in the making of history, a cause infinitely more active than all the transformations in the economic life effected in the same period." *The Socialist State*, Book IV, chap. 1. See also, for a searching discussion, Bernstein's *Die Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus*.



something like the old murmur is heard that "from the day that the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were." Readers of Engels may recall a simile he used to illustrate the doom which on economic grounds inevitably awaits capitalistic production, — a simile whose unintentional aptness might give it place among the curiosities of literature. After showing that this mode of production moves in a "vicious circle," he declares the circle is gradually narrowing, "the movement becomes more and more a spiral, and must come to an end, *like the movement of the planets, by collision with the center.*"\* The inconclusiveness and the remoteness in time are both there. Perhaps the earth and other planets are destined to fall into the sun, but such a wind-up at best is only a dubious hypothesis; and at any rate the collapse of the solar system in that manner is so incalculably remote that the hypothesis is negligible so far as human hopes or fears are concerned. Of course the writer was far from intending to suggest likeness in either of these respects.

They who originated the doctrine of economic determinism in history had no misgivings about its entire conclusiveness, nor, probably, have the great body of socialists at the present time. That such a master-mind as Marx should, while less unambiguous than his associate in the statement of it and of its all-inclusive scope, have built it into his system, has carried weight which makes any reconsideration even

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\* *Socialism*, p. 60.

now temerarious. But the most unquestioning follower cannot deny that reasoning from it led Marx wrong in two expectations: the time within which, and the means wherewith, socialism would achieve its triumph. Marx was an evolutionist in philosophy, and an implication of the evolutionary philosophy is: in all things slow development from stage to stage. This principle, in his more solid work, he recognizes, putting stress on the labor, long and patient, to be done in preparing the people for the great social change, in arousing them to call for it, since only at their call it can come. No sudden upheaval is to usher in the new order, nor is it to be looked for as the gift of some benevolent monarch who may chance to become indoctrinated with socialism; it will come only when the body of the people are educated to see that it is desirable. But in moments of ardor he set all too short a period for this work of preparation; as when, in 1850, turning away from the anarchists who wanted to call the working-men immediately to arms, and chiding them for saying, "we ought to get into power at once, or else give up the struggle," he declared that the proper thing to say to the working people is plainly this: "You will have to go through fifteen, twenty, fifty years of civil wars and wars between nations, not merely for the purpose of changing existing conditions, but to change yourselves and make yourselves worthy of political power." That was sixty years ago, and who will say that the education of the working-man for the responsibilities of government is more than begun? There have been

wars enough in these sixty years, but it is not by wars that this education proceeds. Marx lived in a period of revolutions, and they had made a deep impression on his spirit, leading him to an undue estimate of what is to be accomplished by them, keeping him on the lookout for some crisis, some great war, which should afford the opportunity for a successful uprising of the proletariat. He magnified the place that revolution has in social evolution, and believed that when the time is ripe for the inauguration of the new social régime, the change will be effected by a flying to arms of the working classes. The dominating influence of this great intelligence upon his party has kept this notion of the way the new social order is to be set up longer in currency than it should have been. Only recently has the appeal been made with much effect from Marx as he spoke half a century ago to Marx as he might be expected to speak had he seen what steps toward socialism have been peacefully taken since his day, and the ever-widening opportunity for further triumphs by means of universal suffrage, freedom of speech and of the press, now enjoyed in most civilized countries.

GROUND'S OF THE SOCIALIST HOPE MUST BE  
RECONSIDERED

Of the materialistic bases of socialist expectation, that of a general armed uprising of the workmen is to be absolutely retrenched. Bloody revolution as a means of establishing social justice became superfluous when and where constitutional government and

universal suffrage arrived. For lands under autocratic power another rule may still hold, but for us the cause that cannot be carried by our ballots has nothing to gain from our bullets; too few with the weapon that speaks, we should be too few with the weapon that slays. And the capital advantage of the contest at the polls is, that he who fights, even without running away lives to fight another day — is not destroyed though defeated. So long, then, as defeat is certain or probable, the fighting had best be done at the polls. And when we shall actually have become a majority, it will be gratuitous folly to take up arms, as the day will have been won. If there is an armed uprising then, it will be on the part of our opponents, put on the defensive and resorting to desperate measures to save a cause already lost.

It has been abundantly shown that the present industrial system does not run smoothly, that it involves perpetual conflict of classes, and as a system is in violent self-contradiction. The materialist founders of scientific socialism were not the first to think that an order of things forever evolving strife, harboring in itself undeniable contradictions, — that a rule, a kingdom, be it the Devil's own, divided against itself, must go down. But in considering when and how it was to go down, they did not take into account the tangled complexity of influences operating on the human world, the nature of that world as distinguished from the world of things, which make a social outcome at any time infinitely more obscure and difficult of prevision than is a chemical reaction

or an astronomical event. While social conditions have changed in the last half-century, they have not changed with the expected rapidity nor in the expected manner. There has been no sudden and general upheaval. The scientific socialist is obliged, therefore, to reconsider the situation and make fresh conjectures of the ways and means of future advances. "The time was not ripe for socialism," says Vail, "until the capitalist system had taken on its logical expression in the trust and syndicate. Until this stage no social or political upheaval could accomplish more than to upset thrones and behead monarchs. Such a revolution would avail nothing for us. We need to appreciate this truth when, as in these days, so many quack remedies are proposed, and among them the delusion that the cause of the proletariat could be helped by a grand physical revolution or outbreak of anarchy."\* Still Vail concurs in the judgment of Marx that the proposed change from capitalism to the co-operative commonwealth will be easier of accomplishment than was the earlier passage to the present social state. The strong assertion of Marx as to the greater difficulty of the previous step is couched in the following words: "The transformation of scattered private property arising from individual labor into capitalist private property is, naturally, a process incomparably more protracted, violent, and difficult than the transformation of capitalist private property, already practically

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\* *Principles of Scientific Socialism*, p. 31.

resting on socialized production, into socialized property. In the former case we had the expropriation of the mass of the people by a few usurpers; in the latter we have the expropriation of a few usurpers by the mass of the people." \* But in all honesty what must one now say to this? One must say, in the first place, that the passage from scattered private property to capitalism was never taken by deliberate action of a parliament—the work was done before the bourgeois French revolutionary Assembly took advantage of the situation; nor by a body of capitalists sitting in solemn conclave; it was set on foot and is being brought to a conclusion, as Marx was the first clearly to show, by an insensate thing, by the machine, thrusting itself into the arena of production and revolutionizing industry. A machine is not morally responsible, and takes no measure of the difficulty of what it accomplishes or of the hard and cruel results incidental to its operations. A buzz-saw is indifferent to what it cuts, whether a man's hand or a stick of wood. Therefore, in the next place, it must be said that, to make the cases parallel, we must have another insensate thing coming in upon the great scene of human activity, disrupting the present order of society, expropriating the capitalists, making a new world. But nothing of the kind is expected to show itself. The stroke is to be delivered by a deliberative assembly of the people, by the legislative body of the nation; and who does not

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\* *Capital*, p. 487.

see that here is a difference? No such body, except as a war-measure, ever resorts to a sweeping act of confiscation; how, then, is the legal expropriation of even a few capitalists going to be effected? It can never be done outright by act of Congress. It can be done only by some gradual process, and the only effective procedure yet suggested which does not present insuperable objections is a form of inheritance-tax such as has been outlined in Chapter IV. It gives a look of unreality, of sheer Utopianism, to our movement to go on talking about a consummation involving enormous practical difficulties, as though it were to come about as matter of course and by a kind of fatality; to magisterially announce an impending, unprecedented revolution, with no other hint of the course to be taken to get over or around the more than arctic obstacles between us and that pole of destiny, than the occlusion (if possible) of the way of anarchy.

#### THE INCREASING INTENSITY OF THE CLASS-CONFLICT

If the materialistic indices point only in a general way or not at all to the direct means by which a new social order is to be ushered in, they leave no doubt that a change of some sort must come. Anything that works so roughly, so wastefully, so disastrously as the present arrangements cannot permanently continue. The war of classes, which is the direct outcome, is too fierce, too destructive at times both of life and property to be tolerated in any society not



bent on self-immolation. This conflict cannot be permitted to go on forever; but under capitalism there seems no possibility of its being appeased. Amelioration of the condition of the workers — plan always the first to suggest itself — does not do it. Truthfully, if boastfully, we say that labor in the United States is better off than anywhere else in the world, better paid, better fed, better housed, has shorter hours, more independence; and yet nowhere are strikes so common, so destructive, labor troubles so incessant, the class-conflict so open, undisguised, in such instant readiness for an outbreak. Hard-headed, unsympathetic employers say, and say with truth, that capital by knuckling to the demands of labor has encouraged the making of further demands, and so got itself into more trouble; that a false route has been taken in granting concessions, thinking that they pave the way to peace. The laborer in general is refractory in the measure that he has been accorded independence. For patient obedience and untiring, slavish fidelity, for utter obliviousness of all but the master's interests, a man needs to be short of ability to extricate himself from a situation, and to feel to the marrow of his bones that holding on to it is for him and his the sole means of living. The nearer he is kept to the starvation line the less trouble he will give. The rule, of course, does not apply with rigor in a country like this, where labor, having acquired some independence, has formed unions, and, having become accustomed to a degree of self-assertion, has to be handled more

gingerly; and it is not to be disproved by comparing one industrial establishment with another, and showing how in such and such places generous, fraternal treatment of employés has been responded to by a more faithful service. The rule is to be tested by comparing country with country. By this method the observer will see how the subjugation of the worker and his incorporation in a practically servile class, the imposition of rigorous exactions, and the minimizing of his treatment, that is to say, his pay and the social recognition he gets from his superiors, has made him supple, self-effacing, submissive, obedient to his master "in fear and trembling."

Consequently improving the condition of the laborer intensifies the class-struggle; and as this improvement is inseparable from civilization and characteristic of the best societies, inevitably as a country advances into the light its industries will become more disturbed, class-hostility more acute, until finally a situation is reached altogether beyond endurance. The United States and France are the two countries which by their oft-recurring, spasmodic labor-troubles give this paradoxical evidence of leading the world's civilization. What stronger proof can be desired of the mal-adaptation of capitalism to modern life, its rank disaccord with the best tendencies of our times? It sets up enormous social inequalities which violate the essence of democracy, whose first principle is equality of all citizens before the law; and this, together with its exploiting the proletariat, makes it a tremendously disturbing force in every

republic, most of all in our own, where it has reached a phenomenal development. It assumes a lordly attitude in all controversies, persistently refusing to submit questions in dispute to arbitration, and while notoriously availing itself of the advantages that come from combination, seeks unblushingly and at whatever cost to break down every combination of working-men. In essence hostilities are perpetual. As with nations, so with classes, war is the rule, the intervals of peace only an armed truce, a breathing-space for piling up munitions preparatory to a fiercer combat. Governments, absorbed in building battle-ships, make a feint of doing something to mollify class-animosities as they reach the point of outbreak, but, in the foremost countries, wealth is so dominating that any radical measures trenching upon its autocratic power can hardly be taken, and from what is done comparatively little benefit accrues.\*

The class-struggle is unbalanced, one side greatly superior in numbers but feeble in "the sinews of warfare" and lacking in organization; the other composed of a few men of boundless resources, who, while given to preying on one another, stand ready to join hands in holding down the poor man. The advantage of numbers is more than neutralized by the other considerations. The disciplined few always

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\* Dr. C. W. Eliot has called attention to the Canadian law bearing on labor disputes as in principle worthy of general adoption; but Canada is but an unimportant colony, and we, the greatest, richest nation on earth, are not likely to look that way for a lesson in the art of governing.

overmatch the poorly equipped, unorganized many. And clear as rings, and long as has rung, the call, "Proletarians, get together!" vital to the movement as is that idea, — soul of any real success, — the ears to which it was addressed are not yet generally open to it. The labor-leaders can marshal only a fraction of the laborers, and them only for immediate personal ends visibly within an arm's length, — increase of wages, shortening of hours, regulation of industry, — while the infinitely more important matter of political control is in most countries almost wholly ignored by the great body of working-men. Even in Germany less than one-third of them are in the ranks of the Social Democratic party. In the United States we have only the beginnings of a political organization. The French socialists muster less than one million votes, and the English are fewer still. Certainly we take pride in this showing, moderate as it is, knowing the effort it has cost, what earnest, devoted labor of men and women of this and the preceding generation whose very names chime as matin-bells of triumph in our ears. But the results achieved thus far are sadly short of what the leaders of fifty years ago expected. They figured that by the simple operation of economic law there would come, along with the development and concentration of capital so evidently proceeding, a political union of the proletariat enabling them by sheer force of numbers to overcome all opposition and set up the socialist State. Evidently those leaders left some important factor or factors out of their calculations.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS NOT TO BE CREDITED TO  
ECONOMIC CAUSES ALONE

Beyond a doubt economic laws have much to do in determining the course of history, but not that term, nor any other designating merely exterior natural causes, exhausts the moving forces on the human stage, as extreme materialists would have us think. The abolition of slavery in modern times was not brought about because slavery was unprofitable to the slaveholders, or because the slaves, misused, flew to arms, or because their food was shortened, or for any economic reason whatever. That great achievement was primarily the work of agitators who made appeal to the sentiments of humanity and justice, aroused the moral sense of the nations, stirred to heroic action States only remotely implicated in the evil, provoking them to great sacrifices and unrelenting struggle till the end was reached. So was it with factory legislation in England for the protection of operatives treated with a worse inhumanity than were American slaves; if it took long, it was finally carried well forward by the moral appeal of the Earl of Shaftesbury and his helpers. And fully explicable on economic principles alone as may be the hard dealings by which our great capitalists have made their accumulations, no sane person would attempt on the same principles to account for the open-handed generosity some of them are showing in the disbursement of their millions and hundreds of millions.\*

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\* Engels himself here and there betrayed a reliance on

Seligman, who has made the clearest presentation of the subject, contends that the terms "historical materialism" and "economic determinism" are, to say the least, unfortunate, as seeming to omit from the reckoning causes which certainly do play a considerable part in social development. He would substitute for these "the economic interpretation of history" as more precise and not open to misconception. "Economic interpretation of history means," he says, "not that the economic relations exert an exclusive influence, but that they exert a preponderant influence in shaping the progress of society." In the closing chapter of his book under this title he makes this summation: "As a philosophical doctrine of universal validity, the theory of 'historical materialism' can no longer be successfully defended. But in the narrower sense of economic interpretation of history—in the sense, namely, that the economic factor has been of the utmost importance in history,

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other than his one sole determining cause of all phenomena in the social world. In discussing the monopolies already being set up by the trusts in 1890, he declared: "No nation will put up with production conducted by trusts; with so barefaced an exploitation of the community by a small band of dividend-mongers." In his letters, written toward the end of his life, he considerably modified his presentation of the doctrine, admitting that Marx and he were "partly responsible for the fact that the younger men have sometimes laid more stress on the economic side than it deserves." Commenting on these letters Professor Seligman says: "When we read the latest exposition of their views by one of the founders themselves, it almost seems as if the whole theory of economic interpretation had been thrown overboard."—*The Economic Interpretation of History*, p. 63.

and that the historical factor must be reckoned with in economics—the theory has been, and still is, of considerable significance.” It is, perhaps, not too much to think that the founders themselves, had they survived to this time in the full possession of their powers, would concede as much, for they were not above revising their ideas and confessing that time had required a restatement.

That we have sound reason to expect the capitalistic system to go to pieces from the sheer process of its own development, and fall away, like the skin of a snake, may well be questioned. The very movements that have been taken by one party for symptoms of coming overthrow are to another party evidences of resistless might, of lusty growth and reinvigoration. Our wishes are often the springs of our thought, and so the sources of self-delusion. What reason, for instance, have we to think that the concentration of capital in trusts is going to make deliverance from its domination any easier or any surer? Never has combination weakened the forces that combine. The persons interested are no fewer for combining, and their power for good or ill is infallibly multiplied by more than the number in the coalition. And is it not chimerical to suppose lurking in economic law a sly malice luring men to their ruin, a Machiavelian animus in the nature of things able to blind the shrewdest class that has ever lived and press them headlong to certain destruction?

In the future as heretofore, economic law will bring about social modifications beyond a doubt; but as no



such material discoveries and inventions as inaugurated the present industrial epoch are henceforth to be looked for, the social changes due to material causes are likely to be much less striking, and of an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary character. The words of Bernstein here are to be pondered:

"To whatever degree other forces, besides the purely economic, influence the life of society, just so much more also does the sway of what, in an objective sense, we call historic necessity change. In modern society we have to distinguish in this respect two great streams. On the one side appears an increasing insight into the laws of evolution, and notably of economic evolution. With this knowledge goes hand in hand, partly as its cause, partly again as its effect, an increasing capability of *directing* the economic evolution. The economic natural force, like the physical, changes from the ruler of mankind to the servant according as its nature is recognized. . . . The common interest gains in power to an increasing extent as opposed to private interest, and the elementary sway of economic forces ceases according to the degree in which this is the case, and in all places where this is the case. Their development is anticipated and is therefore accomplished all the more quickly and easily. Individuals and whole nations thus withdraw an ever greater part of their lives from the influence of a necessity compelling them, without or against their will." \*

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\* *Evolutionary Socialism*, pp. 14, 15.

## CHAPTER VII

### SUPERFLUITIES AND EXCRESCENCES

Before proceeding to consider the outlook for socialism from another point of view, it will be well to call attention to some of the futilities of the subject to which the minds of friends and foes alike are apt to run. Only the hopelessly ignorant in this field any longer charge us with proposing to confiscate the world's wealth and distribute it equally among all the people, or with propagating doctrines destructive of family life, or with representing only another and milder form of anarchy; therefore aspersions of that sort, too absurd for notice, need not delay us. That we do propose to have the State, acting for the whole people, acquire by degrees and as rapidly as shall prove practicable, possession of the means of industry, is true, and on the strength of this some well-intentioned persons go on to assert that socialism is — in the end at any rate — to do away with private property altogether. Just what may "in the end" be deemed expedient in this matter, as in many other matters, we are hardly competent to say; the people who shall live in that somewhat remote time will, presumably, be quite as wise as we; they will have the situation immediately before them, and having behind them years on years of rich experience in the work of making a new world, — as we have not, — will be able

without any suggestion from us to arrange their own affairs.

Our part is greatly more restricted; it is simply to take things as they are and attempt to modify them in such manner that they may tend to conform to our ideal. This is modest, but it is serviceable, it is sane. Nothing so disconcerts our public, nothing so blocks our movement as a suggestion that we are going to turn things topsyturvy, that a social revolution is about to break out carrying all before it with such instant and vertiginous sweep that the world of to-morrow will not know itself as the world of to-day. It is not the dreamer but the worker, the dealer with realities, who actually shapes things; and he commences with things as he finds them. Not everything that is is bad. In fact a great part of what has been wrought into the present social constitution is good, a veritable heritage of blessing which we would not do away with if we could,—and this is fortunate, for we could not if we would. As a rule the laws and customs which have been adopted by civilized societies are such as have proved advantageous to the people. The exceptions prove the rule in that they are few, not that they are unimportant; they are such arrangements as are favorable to one class and noxious to another. Reformers seek to abolish these one by one. Socialists, more radical, strike at a system; but the fall of a system is not to carry with it everything that co-exists therewith, the State, the family, the church, the school, and the rest of our variously valued institutions. We

are not to make *table rasée* and go back to primitive communism. We recognize that among the things that stand are incalculable values; that progress is the conspicuous fact in history; that, while terrible mistakes have been made, with resulting serious lapses, the forward movement has prevailed, a cumulating balance has been struck from time to time showing the world wiser and infinitely wealthier; and we know that any future gain must found on the gains already made. The institution of private property, slowly and painfully superseding the primitive communism, was one of these forward movements, instinctively taken by certain advancing tribes in pre-historic times; and it is not, as the Utopian socialists thought, to be retraced. Its abuses are to be checked; and its abuses at their worst are seen in the growth of private fortunes far beyond what by any estimate can be taken as one man's rightful share of the earth and its treasures,—monuments of boundless greed, hateful and sinister when considered as in the main built up out of other men's earnings, and of necessity counterbalanced by wide stretches of poverty somewhere.

Private property can harmoniously co-exist with collective property, and we need not suppose it barred under the new order of things except in so far as the means of production are concerned. One will have one's own house to live in while one lives, which is as long as one has it now. One will own similarly the furnishings of the house, and absolutely the fuel that warms it in winter and the refrigerating material

that cools it in summer, together with whatever one needs to clothe oneself withal and to consume for the nourishment of one's body and for the edification of one's soul; which is more than half the world have now. All consumable articles of every description and the use of all useful articles of production will remain private property.

But the socialist State has not yet arrived, and we have here to do with the waiting period, which we may as well admit is not likely to be very brief. While our patience is not perhaps called on to match that of Rodbertus, who set at five hundred years the time in which his not impractical socialist scheme might probably be got into operation, beyond reasonable doubt all of us now living will have finished our course before what we dream of is realized, so that for our activities we have only to consider the world under the existing social order. In this light, what is to be the socialist's attitude in regard to private property? What projects of law bearing on the subject will he support? He will favor any fair measure which will tend to check the growth of vast fortunes, and the concomitant growth of poverty which is in some sort, and of necessity, a consequence, since obviously if one man has a thousand or a million times more than a fair share of the world's wealth, some others somewhere must have less than a fair share—so much less as to have nothing at all. On the other hand the socialist will favor all honorable means of stimulating industry and increasing its rewards, of encouraging thrift in the

great class of the disinherited and the destitute; and he will regard with satisfaction the multiplication of moderate fortunes. The love of money has been called "the root of all evil," and money is thrice branded "filthy lucre" in Holy Writ; but, just and proper as reproaches of the stuff *in excess* may be, as much or worse is to be said against the total lack of it. Preaching its abolition has a morbid, unwelcome sound, recalling to many a listener exceedingly painful experiences.

#### SOME PRACTICAL QUESTIONS

How the economic problems of a medium of exchange, of interest and rent will be settled in the new world which is sometime to be, is an interesting subject of reflection for learned professors, but one that the rest of us need not greatly concern ourselves about. It can safely be left to that future generation destined to have practically to do with it. For the present and through all the preparatory period before us, the form of currency to which the world is accustomed will best serve the purposes of exchange. Useless now to speculate about "labor-notes," or other hypothetical substitute for money.

There can be no question but that rent in some form will subsist in all time, as the land, even after the State has acquired possession, cannot be left to the free occupation of whoever may squat upon it, without working grave injustice, land being of all degrees of desirability. To insure equal opportunity, rent will be exacted, graduated in amount according

to location, soil, and other considerations that give value; freed, to be sure, from the speculative feature now so disturbing, and greatly modified by the inevitable change of business methods. Moreover, the State is not going at one stroke to possess itself of all the land; its position of unique landlord will be reached by degrees, giving time for the development of the vast system of administration requisite, time to acquire skill in sharp competition with private owners, whose interests of course will be adverse to any reduction of rents.\*

So long as private ownership of the means of production subsists, and it is likely to hold on in a decreasing extent long after collective ownership begins to be instituted, money will continue to draw interest, have a use-value. The rate will decline, as it is now declining, and more markedly since the fever of speculation must subside.

A supreme advantage of the gradual realization of the plan of collective or State ownership of the means of production, will be that it provides for the possibility of there being—as our opponents are positively asserting there are—some lines of industry that can best be conducted as at present. Experiment, not too costly, would soon settle the question in every case. Wherever individual direction was not

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\* Doubtless the means by which the State will facilitate its acquisition of the land, once the policy of collective ownership is adopted, will be the imposition of a steadily increasing tax, resulting at length in annulling the advantage of private ownership.



improved upon by collective direction, it could be retained, continually held back from any abuse of its privilege by the possibility of the State entering the lists as a competitor. It may well be, too, that collective management would profit in efficiency by the competition of privately conducted industries supervised by impartial State authorities. The controlling idea in the coming changes will be, not to set up a new order, cut and dried in every detail, but in all things to take the course that will give the best results. Not until State ownership and conduct of all sorts of affairs has actually demonstrated its superiority in each particular branch, will the State finally take over all sorts of affairs; and in the eventuality of its being proved that some things can on the whole better be done as at present, we shall see, or rather our posterity will see, continuing in the new world, some features of the world with which we are familiar.

THE SOCIALIST IDEAL NOT YET TO BE RIGOROUSLY  
DEFINED

The part of wisdom is to hold our ideal somewhat loosely, open to emendation from day to day, and notably from epoch to epoch; to lay down no finished scheme of a paradise here below, — to keep our faces set to the light; working to-day for what seems best to-day, and again to-morrow for what shall then seem best. It may well be thought that any fixed conception, descending to particulars, of the socialist State, is an obstacle to social progress. The chances are

decidedly that that conception, whose ever it may be, will not be realized. Men specially versed in the subject have miscalculated the course of social evolution for any immediately following twenty-five years, Marx declaring that by economic necessity the number of the very rich must become an ever smaller, of the very poor an ever greater, fraction of the whole people; whereas the facts of the case, contemptuous of his economic necessity, show the contrary;—how then shall we set much store by the finished picture they paint us of society when the next great change shall have come, be it in this, the next, or the following century? One thing we may aver with confidence: the future society will not be a new creation; it will grow as naturally out of present society as man out of boy, and in reaching out after better things will not fail to keep every good thing the past has had. In social movements as in other reconstruction, the work of salvage is by no means to be neglected. The coming age is the child of the age which is passing.

The expectation of entire relief from burdensome toil under the socialist régime is an excrescence which in some minds has attained a surprising growth. Thus the amiable Prince Kropotkin would have us think that the facilities for getting an honest living will be so improved in the good time coming that a man will be able by thirty hours' work to provide satisfactory subsistence for a family of five for a whole year. The cost of their clothing is to be met by fifty hours' work of the same happy man. One hundred and

fifty hours, annually put in, will suffice to cover original cost and repairs of house and furniture suitable for a gentleman in the Golden Age. All told, to maintain a family of five persons the head of the house will have to work only one hour and forty minutes a day!\* But, really, to get rid of work is not such a very laudable ambition. To be sure, some of us, hand-workers and brain-workers, are driven through too many hours, but an eight-hour day can hardly be considered excessively long. Most persons, working by the hour or working for themselves, would be inclined to put in more time than that. Many professional men and students voluntarily work ten, twelve, even fourteen hours, with the drawback that the weariness their work brings on, instead of inducing sleep and so a regularly recurring recuperation, often "gets on the nerves" and makes the night another eight hours' work, more or less unavailing, to get repose. Under socialism there would be decidedly more equal distribution of labor; not only would a lot of people, now idle, have something to do, but several times as many more whose lives are spent in waiting on the idle would be released from that occupation to take up their part of the world's useful work, with the result that there would be a greatly increased amount of socially profitable work done,—a vastly more important desideratum than the shortening of hours. As the advent of mechanical inventions in the industries multiplied pro-

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\* *The Conquest of Bread*, p. 119f.

duction rather than lightened toil, so the effect of coming social changes for the better is likely to be seen more in augmentation of the world's products, diffusion of the comforts, the refinements, the elegances of life, than in any lessened expenditure of effort. There will be some further shortening of the hours of labor; but the main point is that there will be increase of production, carrying comforts, and more than comforts, to all homes; this enrichment of life resulting from the further perfecting of implements, from great increase in the number of hands engaged, and from the fact that with the workers the motive will no longer be operative to do as little and to be as long about it as possible. Remuneration in the measure of service actually rendered, will be the rule in the Co-operative Commonwealth.

#### COMPOSITION OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY

Unfortunately, but perhaps unavoidably, the view has widely obtained that the socialist party is exclusively and of necessity a working-men's party. Its founders were nothing of the kind, nor are all of its leaders even now; but as the working-men are the ones whose interests are to be directly furthered by the movement, and as they are everywhere the most numerous class, the propaganda has been chiefly carried on among them. Though the results of this propaganda have been more moderate than might have been expected, enough has been accomplished to give some basis for the feeling inside and outside

of the movement that this is a class-party, by rights exclusively made up of wage-earners, taking the term in its narrowest sense. In a little wider sense professional men — physicians, clergymen, journalists, teachers, lecturers, even lawyers — are wage-earners, as are more obviously all salaried clerks and officials; but it happens that the class-feeling separates the proletariat from these as a body, almost as sharply as from the capitalists, notwithstanding the fact that Marx and Lassalle and Liebknecht and Engels and Jaurès and Anatole France and Ruskin and William Morris, not to mention as many more of the foremost lights of socialism, must be counted in one or another of these categories of “scholars and gentlemen.” In the nature of the case it must be rare indeed, phenomenon of irrepressible genius, that a man comes from a life of common toil to a commanding place in any field of wide activity; and therefore, for the good of the cause, it is highly desirable that the party continue to recruit some of its leaders from the circles of the learned and influential, whence have come so many of its honored names. This will the more surely occur the more the workers and their sympathizers fraternize; and the importance of it can hardly be overstated. No otherwise, in fact, can any great success be achieved. For an exclusively proletarian party confronts (with or without reason) prejudices of the strongest in the great body of people constituting the present ruling classes — prejudices which must somehow be abated. These people will never tire of holding up such a party in the lurid light of the

Reign of Terror, and citing against it the horrors of the Commune of 1871, all oblivious of the equal or greater atrocities of the conquerors. And there is another consideration more vital than the opinion these people may have of us. Apprehension of rashnesses that might be committed by an element of the working-class, should they come to power, probably deters a considerable part of that very class from joining in the socialist movement, the half-conscious judgment being that the circumstances are such as "make us rather bear those ills we have than fly to others that we know not of." An immense gain all around would come from banishing in theory and in practice the idea that this is a purely working-man's party.

#### ECONOMIC DETERMINISM

Of all the superfluities that have been connected with the modern socialist movement the philosophy of materialism is the most notable, the most persistent, and the most damaging. That the leaders of an agitation which first of all was to be political, and whose appeal is in the main to an untutored class, should have laid down as fundamental a "theory of the universe" debated from time immemorial by the academicians, and withal having no more to do with the essential principles of socialism than Calvinism has with democracy, is explicable only as an idiosyncrasy of the German mind, which never rests till it finds, or at least asserts, a profoundly-underlying philosophic basis for whatever it undertakes to build.

And even this explains nothing more than the leaders' habit of authenticating to themselves their convictions; it leaves in the dark the singular procedure of resting a political programme addressed to the unlearned upon a speculative system notoriously in dispute among those most competent to pass upon it, and hopelessly beyond the depth of the rest of us.

Of course it will be said that on this philosophy founds the economic determinism of history, and so the whole Marxist presentation of socialism; but, even so, it must be admitted that this makes the presentation academic, not popular. Where is the call to action in a revolution or a reform whose manifesto omits all ethical motives, and distinctly makes every result depend, as a friend has forcibly put it, "upon a precise and accurately defined law of evolution which is as inflexible as cast-iron"? Whether such a law can be traced and shown to act independently of mental convictions and moral considerations (of which by the theory it is the sole generating cause), so turning the social world into an *automaton*, is, to say the least of it, in grave doubt. Evidence one way and the other is drawn from statistics, on the finality of which, and particularly on the superfluity of the Marxist contention, the judgment of Professor Ely, whose friendliness to socialism gives weight of fairness to his verdict, is of interest. He says: "Probably there is no sufficient statistical record in existence to enable us either to prove or disprove the Marxist law of social evolution. But socialism does not depend upon this law. If it could



be completely refuted to-morrow, in such manner that every one would have to admit its refutation, socialism would not be weakened thereby, except, perhaps, temporarily." \*

Beyond a doubt as time goes on we shall hear less of non-essentials, of side-issues, and of Utopian extravagances. Already the contentions of socialism are visibly narrowing down to the indispensable elements, the vital principles that are of universal application and within the purview of all. The appeal gets urgent, preponderant, vivified with sentiment that moves and controls the human world, sentiment that must be enlisted ere there can be any social change for the better. Whatever economic laws apply will operate without our supervision, but we who are to act and to lead must have an inward and conscious determination, some strong conviction of truth and right, some mighty moral impulse which will not let us rest till our task is done.

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\* *Socialism and Social Reform*, p. 177.

## CHAPTER VIII

### PROSPECTS OF SOCIALISM ON MORAL GROUNDS

Proudhon's audacious charge, "Private property is theft," while not justified in its length and breadth, has a limited application which must be frankly admitted. Land titles in every country are based, not very far back, on nothing better than brute force; armed invaders drove out the earlier occupants, or kings rewarded their favorites with the confiscated estates of political or religious foes,—proceedings whose only show of extenuation lies in the fact that the title of the dispossessed, traced back in turn, would prove to rest on a similar dubious basis. Nobody anywhere owns any land that was not sometime acquired by violence as unmitigated as that of the highwayman. But all this belongs to the history of other days. The offenders are beyond the reach of correction, the outraged beyond the reach of indemnity. The "cloud" on the title can only be pointed to as affording a precedent (such as it is) for another expropriation to be made, though in no personal interest and by wholly different measures. Let us then come at once to present-day affairs, and ask whether private property in land is now chargeable with anything in the nature of theft.

## UNRIGHTEOUS APPROPRIATION OF VALUES

What gives value to land? Not richness of soil alone, or purity of water, or pleasantness of situation or of climate. All these features combined would not sell an acre without the presence on the ground, actual or prospective, of human beings. The coming of people to till the land or otherwise use it, makes it worth having, gives it a value, puts a price on it which mounts with every new arrival. At any moment the valuation derives almost wholly from the advent of the settlers, from their labors of tillage, of building, of making towns and cities. But it will happen in any case that a great part of the land, especially at centers of population where the advance of values is most marked, is owned by persons who do not reside on it, who, perhaps, have never seen it, who live a thousand miles away, and do nothing whatever for improvement beyond paying their taxes. The considerable, sometimes enormous increase of value is a social product, a creation of the various workers drawn to the place, the great part of whom never see a cent of the increment which by their presence and their toil they have created. Much of what they have created and so is rightfully theirs flows into the pocket of some absentee landlord who has helped not at all, but rather hindered a growth out of which he derives a liberal income. This money is only not stolen because, under the present order of things, the holder of the land has a legal right to an

increment of value which he has not earned and which justly belongs to other people.

The essence of robbery lies in appropriating something which is rightfully another's without giving an equivalent in return; but as things are at present this is constantly done with no slightest sense of compunction. The gambler does it barefacedly, offsetting against his gains only the risk he runs of losing. But in his trade as in stock-gambling—so called from its resemblance thereto—the art of the thing lies in reducing to a minimum the risk of losing. They who contrive to load the dice are sure enough of winning. Power to control the market gives to the lords of finance the highwayman's chance to empty the pockets of whoever ventures on the same road, and gives it to them free from the highwayman's risk of arrest.

The value of the average annual production of a laborer in the United States was in 1900 reported to be \$2377; the average wages, \$425. The difference, \$1952, went to the manufacturer, contractor, or other employer. Deducting a reasonable amount for use of money invested, and for superintendence, with a further sum to cover the actual risk run by the investor, there remains a net profit, large as compared with the wages paid, which in all justice, one might think, should be added to the wages. But no; this entire remainder is appropriated by the employer. Occasionally, though very rarely, we hear of a capitalist employer of labor with some sensibility to

this situation making over to his employés a portion of his profits—a small fraction, we may be sure, but nevertheless aggregating a considerable sum; and it is worth noting that in such cases the action is pretty generally looked upon as a *restitution* rather than the bestowal of a gratuity. The fact that the distribution is voluntary gives it the appearance of a gift made out of pure generosity, but the world knows that the recipients really earned it all. Such acts of partial restitution are no doubt greatly more infrequent than they would be if employers generally were individuals instead of joint-stock companies made up of people who for the most part have nothing to do with the conduct of the business, contenting themselves with a careful lookout for the dividends. As it is, voluntary profit-sharing with the workers, even in a slight measure, is exceptional, serving hardly more than to mark an instinctive recognition, by business men of conscience, that in the system under which they are living and acting is something radically wrong. To one nowise blinded by self-interest the appropriation by the capitalist of the entire profits of industry is, fairly considered, nothing better than a form of legalized theft. Few see it thus, because of the universal practice, conscience itself commonly yielding to custom.

“Custom calls me to it;  
What custom wills, in all things should we do it.”

## MORAL FAILURE OF OUR ORTHODOX ECONOMY

These immoral principles underlying our economic life, it is very difficult to point to any department of our activities where uprightness and honor are sedulously cultivated. Government has nominally a function of this sort; nevertheless in practice the ethics of legislatures will not rank high, and statutes, State and federal, in their operation not infrequently prove beyond measure debasing. Take, for example, the laws governing taxation. If the Devil himself had conceived them expressly for the wholesale corruption and debasement of the people, they could hardly have been better suited to the purpose. Our tariff laws make liars and swindlers not only of great importers, but of a host of travelers returning yearly from lands of lower prices. These latter are all required to "declare" in black and white the purchases they have made and the precise cost of every article. Those whose purchases do not exceed the limited amount kindly allowed to come in free of duty are naturally very conscientious in their "declarations"; but the others? How about their statements? If one person out of a shipload is strictly honest in his report, he will hardly be so on his next return, not caring to place himself a second time in a blaze of moral glory so exceptional. And how can we expect people to be punctilious in complying with customs regulations,—which very likely in their hearts they consider unjust, barbaric,—when it is so generally

their habit to dodge whenever they can the payment of taxes the most equitable, resorting to tricks and misrepresentations truly despicable? The amount of personal property that comes to the knowledge of the assessor in this richest of countries is derisory, and provokes the comment that the law makes liars of us all. If a few would prefer to tell the truth, they are held back from doing so by the practice of the rest, truth-telling under the circumstances carrying with it the penalty of paying a greatly disproportionate share of the taxes. So there is nothing for it but to deny having anything, which we do as glibly as possible, serenely unmindful of the fate of Ananias and Sapphira.

Thus a good part of our laws as well as our customs promote vice; the seamy side of the social system comes out all around. Turn which way we will there is that which defiles. Business has its rules, but its moral law seems to be limited to the keeping of contracts. Its very soul is greed, and outside of its rules it will not be stayed by any consideration, human or divine. The social structure as it stands is shaped and fashioned in its interest, to nurture its spirit of cupidity, of covetousness. On this point Professor Rauschenbusch brings the ringing arraignment:—

“If it were proposed to invent some social system in which covetousness would be deliberately fostered and intensified in human nature, what system could be devised which would excel our own for this purpose? Competitive commerce exalts selfishness to the



dignity of a moral principle. It pits men against one another in a gladiatorial game in which there is no mercy and in which ninety per cent. of the combatants finally strew the arena. It makes Ishmaels of our best men and teaches them that their hand must be against every man, since every man's hand is against them. It makes men who are the gentlest and kindest friends and neighbors, relentless task-masters in their shops and stores, who will drain the strength of their men and pay their female employées wages on which no girl can live without supplementing them in some way; it spreads things before us and beseeches and persuades us to buy what we do not want. The show-windows and bargain-counters are institutions for the promotion of covetousness among women. Men offer us goods on credit and dangle the smallness of the first installment before our eyes as an incentive to go into debt heedlessly. They try to break down the foresight and self-restraint which are the slow product of moral education, and reduce us to the moral habits of savages who gorge to-day and fast to-morrow. Kleptomania multiplies. It is the inevitable product of a social life in which covetousness is stimulated by all the ingenuity of highly paid specialists. The large stores have to take the most elaborate precautions against fraud by their employées and pilfering by their respectable customers. The finest hotels are plundered by their wealthy patrons of anything from silver spoons down to marked towels. After the annual Ladies' Day at a prominent club in Chicago over two hundred spoons

and two hundred and thirty-seven sprigs of artificial decoration, besides miniature vases and bric-a-brac, were missing; and that is always the case after Ladies' Day, and never at other times. At a reform-school for boys two lads were pointed out to me as the sons of two men of great wealth. They had been placed there by their parents to cure them of their inveterate habit of stealing. Their fathers were in the United States Senate. Our business life borders so closely on dishonesty that men are hardly aware when they cross the line. It is a penal offense for a government officer to profit by a contract which he awards or mediates; in business life that is an every-day occurrence. No wonder that our officials are corrupt when their corruption is the respectability of business life." \*

And, be it observed, this terrible impeachment is of the system rather than of the people who are the victims of it. The land-owners, the mill-owners, the shop-keepers, the legislators, and the rest, some of whose acts we reprobate, do, on an average, no worse than others would do in their places. The system conditions success on courses of procedure not all of which are morally defensible, and only the few to whom success is a secondary consideration, and who, therefore, pass for weaklings, milk-sops, incapables, decline to comply with the conditions. It certainly is not possible to achieve any great success in the world, to pile up millions, and at the same time in all things do to others as we would have others do to us.

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\* *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, pp. 265, 266.

Indeed, it may be questioned whether one can in that high moral fashion get through the world at all, as the world is now constituted, without becoming a public charge. Disinterestedness, entire devotion to the general good, love of the human brotherhood and of oneself only as an infinitesimal part thereof, flies full in the face of the existing order, and cannot possibly be practiced. It is solemn mockery to urge anything of the kind. The custom of exhorting people to be good, results under present circumstances in a compromise of the idea of goodness. The keeping of the Golden Rule is frankly set aside as out of the question, as is also the law of brotherly love in its general application. One is charged to be a good citizen, keeping the peace, favoring law and order; a good neighbor, sympathetic with one's set, performing kindly offices; a good business-man, maintaining such integrities as the current rules of his particular business enjoin, without, of course, going beyond these to cripple himself with scruples that jeopardize success. Every one knows what is meant by a "good business-man," and how the epithet "good" varies in its meaning with the business, as does the epithet "bad."

"That in the captain's but a choleric word,  
Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy."

What makes a man "good" in one line may count for little or nothing in another. It is good business in the merchant to be exceedingly affable, effusive, to be flush with his money; the same traits are par-

ticularly "good" in the politician — notably as election-day approaches; but in the physician or the lawyer these qualities are nearly indifferent, and in depositaries of trusts, guardians of people's savings, they are prejudicial. It is good business for the banker to be accurate and trustworthy, to be honest, as we say. But his honesty, eminent as it is, is not to be taken in every sense of the word. They who are accustomed to bank their money, and even to place in the hands of their banker, without so much as taking a receipt, valuable securities payable to bearer, are not bound to suppose that his honesty is broad enough to include the virtue of truth-telling. A vice-president of a great bank assures the present writer that bankers, in what they say of one another, are unscrupulous and inveterate liars. Business is business, and every branch of it has its vice no less essential to success than its virtues.\* So goodness as it comes out in business is seen to be a sorry compromise, one that would have given umbrage to the staid moralists of other days. There is a contradic-

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\* "It is a damnable fact that cries to heaven for redress, and yet is strangely ignored by good people in general, that we all of us every day of our lives are actually and persistently tempted into doing what we assume that scoundrels and rascals were the first to do, tempted into devising a new adulteration, or into some other rascally, swindling operation; that we are all of us, good as well as bad, daily and hourly being tempted into gambling and other similar anti-social obliquities, the more so as all our business is more or less gambling; worst of all that poverty-stricken women among us are sorely tempted to dishonor themselves; — and these temptations, mark, proceed from society, which ought to be man's Providence on earth." — Grönlund, *The New Economy*, p. 81.

tion here not to be lightly glossed over, as the manner of some preachers and religious editors is; it is glaring as noonday, and not to be hidden from men of the world whose current sayings right to the point are: "One cannot do business and also run a moral-reform society"; "The Golden Rule is not applicable in the world of affairs"; "The moral law is inconvenient in the counting-room." The scarcely disguised antagonism comes out in the proverbially slight interest of business men in any ethical movement, in any great cause, even in municipal reform which promises a saving of money as well as of morals. They coldly say that the time they would have to spend in reforming the administration of municipal affairs is worth more to them in dollars and cents than all they would gain by squelching corruption.

Is it permissible to think that an order of things thus at war with all that is best in man is to endure permanently, working evil as long as the world stands? Are we to admit that the comforting belief which has sustained reformers in every age, breaking from their lips in words that flashed light through the thickest darkness, the belief that "Truth is mighty and will prevail"; that,

"Though the cause of Evil prosper, yet 'tis Truth alone is strong";

that

"Whoso fights and whoso falls,  
Justice conquers evermore";

that Right, crushed to-day, will rise again to-morrow,

—that all this is nothing better than a hollow delusion? For some of us, at least, no such blank pessimism will serve. If it be true that a law of social evolution is blindly working out a new and better social order, well and good; so much the more evidence of beneficence in the nature of things; but in the meantime, and in view of a possible inconclusiveness in the materialistic argument, it will not be amiss to keep with the luminous ones who have thought that the human spirit with its convictions, its hopes, and its longings, has much to do with the shaping of the human world; they will not only comfort us, they will stimulate us to high endeavors to that end.

SOCIALISM PROPOSES MORAL RENOVATION FROM  
THE FOUNDATION

A chief distinction of socialism is that it is an ethical system, a system through and through suffused with a moral purpose. Its supreme watchword is Justice, Social Justice. It works for the equal rights of all without regard to class. Its advocate is not thinking of the benefit he may personally derive from its adoption, he is thinking of all his fellows up and down the earth, and of them in the degree of their need. Indeed it is hardly the living that he expects will enter upon the full realization of his hopes, but a generation as yet unborn; a fact which gives to his earnestness and his devotion a high spiritual significance. Hard to match in disinterestedness, in generous ardor, in self-effacing toil for a remote end,

are the people, plain and homespun for the most part, often chivalrous youth, who have taken up this propaganda. Testimony to all this is borne by observers outside as well as inside the movement. Professor Richard T. Ely who, appreciative as he is of socialism, would hardly call himself a socialist, writes:

"Nothing in the present day is so likely to awaken the conscience of the ordinary man or woman, or to increase the sense of individual responsibility, as a thorough course in socialism. The study of socialism has proved the turning-point in thousands of lives, and converted self-seeking men and women into self-sacrificing toilers for the masses. The impartial observer can scarcely claim that the Bible produces so marked an effect upon the daily, habitual life of the average man and the average woman who profess to guide their conduct by it, as socialism does upon its adherents. The strength of socialism in this respect is more like that of early Christianity as described in the New Testament." \*

Occasionally a jibe is flung at the "immorality of socialism," but it is sure to come from one who is either intentionally unjust, or is not well informed on what he is talking about. Not but that there are socialists who are less than models to hold up to our children; such persons beyond a question are to be met with in other political parties; they have been found, it is said, even in churches. The socialists are

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\* *Socialism and Social Reform*, pp. 145, 146.



not a religious order, a Christian denomination of Puritanical pretensions; but, curiously enough, an opponent who knows them is apt to handle them as though they were, and to treat any scandal in the life of one of their party-leaders with a rigor of criticism never applied to the doings of men in other political parties, and rarely used even in dealing with the sins of churchmen. An unavoidable inference from this custom, of which examples might be cited from religious journals, is that socialists are supposed to have higher moral ideals than their opponents, and so may reasonably be expected to lead better lives.

In point of fact the socialists are the only political party with a platform distinctively and comprehensively moral. The contentions of the great parties, where they are not solely for "the spoils of office," go not beyond some economic question such as tariff, or form of currency, or steamship subsidies. Generally, as elections come on, their difficulty is to find an issue that really means anything to the mass of the people. Though other, smaller parties are not so poor in this respect, they have but one idea, and stop with that, be it single-tax, prohibition of liquor-selling, or what not. But the socialist platform sets forth an imposing array of principles, every one of them vitally significant to the body-politic, as friend and foe can see, every one of them embodying a moral obligation. There is a distinctly human element running through it from end to end, a spirit of justice, of fraternity, of universal fellowship, such as no other

party knows and no church offers. John Spargo gives us only the plain truth where he says:

"In spite of all our much vaunted progress, if we except the strivings of the socialists, the spiritual note is almost wholly lacking in our national life. Everywhere there is crass materialism, an absence of ideals of social justice and righteousness. The dollar standard rules everywhere. We boast loudly enough about our material wealth, but we are careless of those purple fountains of wealth, the blood of human beings. An assault upon any of our markets anywhere is quickly repelled, but not so an assault upon the lives of human beings. The dollar still holds a higher place than man in our social economy.

"Infinitely precious, therefore, is this challenge to our national brain and conscience which the socialist brings. With unwavering courage and eloquence fired with the elemental passion for liberty, the socialists are incessantly demanding that human beings be placed above dollars in our social reckonings. Echoing Isaiah's exhortation, the modern socialist agitator is forever crying, 'Come, let us reason together! Let us take stock of our national life! Are our possessions worth the price we pay for them? Is Mammon a good paymaster?' The challenge of Jesus to the individual, our socialist agitator hurls at the nation: What doth it profit a nation if it gains the whole world but loses its own soul?

"Granted the glory of 'our far-flung battle-line,' do we seek to pay for it by robbing childhood's cheeks

of their bloom and joy? Granted the impressiveness of the tables of exports and imports with their 'balance of trade' gains, are we sure that all the cost is counted, all the cries and tears, all the wrecked hopes and damned souls? Granted the splendor of the palaces of our millionaires and the cathedrals in which they worship, can we be indifferent to the number of human lives paid for them? Is it of no moment to us that for the splendor of the palace we must endure the squalor of a thousand noisome, body-and-soul-destroying hovels; that for the grandeur of the cathedral we must endure the shame of the brothel and the reproach of the harlot?" \*

VICTORY MUST ULTIMATELY COME TO THE CAUSE  
WHICH IS JUST AND RIGHT

The sure ground of our hopes in the ultimate triumph of socialism lies in the character of its contentions, their humanity, their justice, their thorough-going equity and righteousness. The devotees among us put this reason for their confidence in the lines of Faber:

"For right is right, since God is God,  
And right the day must win."

Others, touched with modernism, put the same thought in another form, and cite a proximate rather than a final cause. The reason, so far as they can see, for holding that Right will win is that it is capable of

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\* *Spiritual Significance of Modern Socialism*, pp. 48-50.

forceful presentation to the minds of men; the minds of men, if they can be reached, being responsive to the voice of truth and justice. It matters little in what terms we explain to ourselves *why* a great cause succeeds, but the conditions under which it is observed to succeed are important practical considerations, and may be definitely determined. With the continuance of freedom of speech and of the press, now established in civilized countries, a really important movement which can be shown to be at once beneficent and practical seems to be certain of ultimate popular approval. The stolid masses may be distressingly slow about falling into line, and selfishly interested opponents may long block the way; but the moral strength of the cause will prove too much for lethargy on the one hand and for rapacity on the other, will enlist such a force of devoted, tireless advocates as to awaken the slumbering conscience of the people and call to the field a crusading army strong enough to bear down all opposition.

A feature about socialism universally remarked upon is the number of its earnest, voluntary, self-sacrificing propagandists. One meets them at every turn and in most unexpected places, mostly among the intelligent poor, but occasionally in the homes of the rich, deeply serious souls touched with the needless sorrows of the world, doing diligently their work, letting no opportunity slip to cast some little light on the dark side of life and to show how greatly socialism would change all that. Whoever is known to be appreciative of the movement sees much of these

workers, and can but admire, though often with a feeling of humiliation, the persistence, the unwearying patience, the wholehearted disinterestedness, with which they carry on their difficult and often disagreeable educative work. Many of them are youths just out of college, overflowing with an ardor of devotion that speaks from their eager eyes. When one of these comes into your office or your study with a bundle of papers or tracts under his arm, his face aglow with a fine enthusiasm of humanity which makes you unmindful of his plain attire, bringing his thought of the new world to be made out of the old,—a crudity, it may be, in his ideas, which you overlook for the moment and forget when he is gone,—there is that about him which suggests the men who in other centuries went over Europe converting the heathen to Christianity; and when he takes his leave you feel that he has taken a bit of your heart with him. It is because such calls have come to the present writer that he is now writing. Among these visitors he recalls a young Presbyterian clergyman of good mind and good culture and a heart that has room for all that is human, who, coming to think that socialism is practically the same as Christianity, ventured to preach it in his village church,—with results that might have been expected. Not to be silenced, he came to the city, and, with the aid of a man of means here who believes in the cause, started a little socialist publication, built with his own hands a shelter for himself and his wife in which he lived in more than apostolic simplicity, working early and late for the

cause nearest his heart, writing much and speaking wherever he could get a hearing. The financial returns of his publishing enterprise, even with the subsidy of his one generous patron, hardly meeting expenses, he finally, rather than quit the city and lose the chance of saying his word, took to driving a coal-delivery wagon for one of the great firms. No hardship, no discouragement, no neglect dismayed him. He left us at last only to seize an opportunity which would enable him elsewhere the better to further his one absorbing, unremunerative interest.

If there is any such thing as evolution in morals, a tendency to the elimination of evil and to the up-building of what is good and true, of what is for human weal, the triumph of socialism in its struggle with capitalism is inevitable; for it proposes nothing less than the wiping out of a set of conditions which are the compelling cause of the most shocking inequalities, the subjugation of three-fourths of the human world to the service of the other fourth, and their perpetual exploitation from the cradle to the grave.

In the first place socialism would completely change the outlook upon the world to the new-comer, and make his welcome and his fate forever cease to depend on the accident of high or low birth. It would make not only the breathing air and the rolling waters accessible to him, but the land as well; so putting an end at once to these two abominations: the monstrous evil of asserting an exclusive private ownership in what is obviously by right a universal

provision of Nature, and the appropriation by individuals of the enhancement in value of land due to the influx of population, — a form, as we have seen, of legalized robbery of enormous proportions. This alone is so immeasurably great a reform that even the moderate approach to it proposed by Henry George is believed by his followers to promise the practical abolition of poverty and of a great part of the ills that accompany poverty. The single-tax would certainly save from the moral miseries of seeking, by deception or downright lying, to escape assessment of property that can be concealed. But all this and much more would result from collective ownership of the whole domain, which would make an end even of land taxation and of the corruption with which the whole business of assessment is beset.

The evil of landlordism has not as yet attained any such growth in America as it has in the United Kingdom, so vast has been the extent of our unoccupied territory; but the land-grabbers are crowding to the front, and ever have an eye on the most desirable tracts. Especially are the forests falling into their hands now that timber has become valuable, and all mineral, oil, gas, and coal deposits are seized upon with avidity. One cannot but think how incomparably more comfortable in outward things, how much whiter and fairer within, our people as a whole would have been had they had from the first the enjoyment of equal rights in all the bounties that Nature has lavished upon this wide-reaching land



which, or any part of which, most of us unfortunately can call our "own" only in a Pickwickian sense.

We believe in the future of socialism because it proposes to restore to the disinherited their equal right, with any and all, to every natural good, and to make that right inalienable to them and their children forever. Such a project of universal justice links the movement to the eternal verities and to the forward trend of things in the moral world, and these, we take it, are the surest grounds of confidence.

The existing order of things is often commended for a supposed power it has to stimulate enterprise and promote industry. The work of the world would slacken, we are told, but for the whip which private ownership of the means of production puts in the hands of the managers. But as matter of fact the tendency of our people under this system is away from the work of production, away from the *creation* of wealth, and into speculation in wealth already created, into all sorts of exchange other than that which belongs to the legitimate distribution of the products of labor, all sorts of efforts to get something for nothing; hence we have a swollen and ever-swelling class of unprofitable citizens who scorn to do anything useful, who "live by their wits"; that is, by their skill in manipulating values and getting possession of what is not their own in such astute ways as to escape criminal charges. This is the exciting game of life in our modern world, and appeals to so large a part of our native population that the duller labor of pro-

duction is left in great and ever-increasing measure to immigrants. These in turn, if at all favorably situated, develop in the next generation the same disinclination to toil, and so our industries call for an ever in-flowing stream of foreigners. This does not look as though the system under which we live were favorable to habits of industry. But the point germane to this present discussion is that the system does induce immorality, sets men preying upon one another, gambling in values that other men create, content to live upon a world for which they do nothing, in which they have no useful function unless it be to reproduce their species.

We have seen how by our unjust arrangements the unearned increment in land, obviously a social product, becomes the land-owner's perquisite. There is an unearned increment also in other property, arising from the same cause — growth of population — and which ought in justice to go to that population. Thus, advance in railroad stocks (other than spasmodic leaps speculatively induced) comes from the development of the country, the multiplication of its people and of their products, from the toil of a greatly increased number of human hands along the lines and at connecting points. It is, therefore, a social product, belongs of right to the people who have caused it. But, under existing conditions, it makes the fortune of individual stockholders and quickens the pulse of speculation. Socialism would put an end to all this. The people would own the railroads and all other public utilities, and the benefits would accrue

to the people. The rage of speculation would die away for lack of anything to feed on, and the host of speculators would be reduced to the necessity of seeking some productive employment. We believe in the future of socialism because it will bring this immense moral gain.

So we may reasonably think that when the case is clearly set before the people they will see that there is, to say the least of it, a higher morality in securing to every worker the full net result of his labor than there is in permitting the capitalist *entrepreneur* to take the entire profit of production; and we may further reasonably think that when the course of higher morality is made plain to everybody, a way will be found to take that course; in other words socialism will result.

If, as Mr. Carnegie thinks, a sufficient reason for opposing the scheme of an income-tax is, "that it will make a nation of liars," one is at a loss to see what defense there is for a great part of the tax-laws already on the statute-books. Most taxes are more or less evaded by the same improbity that an income-tax would provoke. A capitalist government which should disallow all imposts not favorable to morality would find itself reduced to straitened circumstances. It is the conspicuous feature of the whole social system that it incites falsifying, over-reaching, inordinate cupidity, and to such a degree that ever and anon there is uncovered in high places some scandalous exhibition of these vices, calling for a spasmodic legal fumigation of a city and the deportation to a

penitentiary of a batch of its officials and leading citizens. How then can we help thinking that this system must pass away, and that the sole practical substitute ever suggested must take its place?

It surely is not possible that an order of things that at so many points revolts the moral sense can be the final order. People are not going to persist forever in nurturing their children in a theory and practice at war with the best instincts of childhood, and to which the unsoiled, sensitive spirit at first yields with an unforgettable pang. The world will not forever keep up the farce of formally professing to honor a high moral code and at the same time notoriously disregard it wherever it obstructs the way to material gain; one of the two courses will certainly be abandoned. Either the profession, becoming more and more hollow and meaningless, will cease to be made, and we shall arrive at a stage undisguisedly conscienceless, with no shadow of faith in anything above the baseness of our practice; or the soul within us, "our life's star," will break through the clouds about us, will disperse them beyond our horizon, will command our actions no less than our thoughts, and we shall have new heavens and a new earth. To them who believe that the moral sense in man is the sublimest thing we know,—the final outcome of ages of evolution,—that it is linked with what is supreme, deepest, highest, and mightiest in the universe, there can be no doubt as to the ultimate issue of this antagonism.

## CHAPTER IX

### SOCIALISM UNIVERSAL PEACE

Since so famous a warrior as General Sherman made the trenchant averment, "War is hell," nobody dealing with the subject need any more stand in fear of exaggerating its abominations. Presumably that characterization covers the worst that can be said. Still, with all the flame it suggests, the saying can hardly be called illuminating. The rough word of the predicate, once full of lurid light, has grown dull and vacuous in our day. Carlyle's picture of a definite typical bit of war is more to the present purpose:

"What, speaking in quite unofficial language, is the net purport and upshot of war? To my own knowledge, for example, there dwell and toil in the British village of Dumdrudge usually some five hundred souls. From these, by certain 'Natural Enemies' of the French, there are successfully selected during the French war, say thirty able-bodied men. Dumdrudge at her own expense has suckled and nursed them; she has, not without difficulty and sorrow, fed them up to manhood, and even trained them to crafts, so that one can weave, another build, another hammer, and the weakest can stand under thirty stone avoirdupois. Nevertheless, amid much weeping and swearing, they are selected; all dressed in red; and shipped away at the public charges some two thousand miles, or say

only to the south of Spain; and fed there till wanted. And now to that same spot, in the south of Spain, are thirty similar French artisans, from a French Dumdrudge, in like manner wending; till at length after infinite effort the two parties come into actual juxtaposition; and Thirty stands fronting Thirty, each with a gun in his hand. Straightway the word 'Fire!' is given; and they blow the souls out of one another; and in place of sixty brisk, useful craftsmen, the world has sixty dead carcasses, which it must bury, and anew shed tears for. Had these men any quarrel? Busy as the Devil is, not the smallest! They lived far enough apart; were the entirest strangers; nay, in so wide a Universe, there was even, unconsciously, by Commerce, some mutual helpfulness between them. How then? Simpleton! their Governors had fallen out; and instead of shooting one another, had the cunning to make these poor blockheads shoot. — Alas, so is it in Deutschland, and hitherto in all other lands; still as of old, 'what devilry soever Kings do, the Greeks must pay the piper!' — In that fiction of the English Smollet, it is true, the final Cessation of War is perhaps prophetically shadowed forth; where the two Natural Enemies, in person, take each a Tobacco-pipe, filled with Brimstone; light the same, and smoke in one another's faces till the weaker gives in; but from such predicted Peace-Era, what blood-filled trenches and contentious centuries may still divide us!" \*

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\* *Sartor Resartus*, Book 2, Chapter VIII.

The fidelity of this sketch to facts can be questioned only in that the sixty combatants are made mercifully to accomplish with promptitude a sweeping slaughter, whereas in reality death on a battle-field is usually less summary, coming under hideous circumstances and after long-drawn-out agonies, often after successive wounds in many a terrific encounter.

The hard facts of the business do not come out much in our histories. Of the grim, horrific spectacle presented by any battle of our own time we know next to nothing unless we were on the ground, and even then but a little part. What war-time shows us vividly is a season of intense public excitement, a high tide of enthusiasm carrying the multitude away; we see the waving of banners, the marching of the gaily caparisoned troops, hear the stirring strains of "wild war-music," and the flaming words of "patriotic" orators. The young and ardent, swept by the wave of passion, are eager to do and to dare, and snatch with joy at whatever fate. All goes merry as a marriage-bell;—but after? The curtain drops on the passage of our brothers to the front, and of what befalls them we get only an inkling now and then. In the end we find that many of them come not back, and the remnant comes mostly maimed and scarred. The survivors are welcomed home with heartiness, but the old illusion is broken. The frenzied devotion of the outset is shrouded now by too many griefs, that gala-day turned, in the memory of thousands, into the saddest, darkest day in life.

Where an armed struggle is inevitable, as under



present conditions it may perhaps sometimes be, the devotion of the soldier is assuredly something to command praise; no aspersion is to be cast upon it. The thing to be arraigned and adjudged is the popular notion, installed and nurtured by many of our politicians, that war is in itself eminently honorable, having even a distinctly ethical quality; that nothing accords better with the Ten Commandments than the killing of ten thousand, twenty thousand men, if only it be done in battle. These twenty thousand victims in the two armies, like Carlyle's sixty, have no sign of a grudge against those they are killing; they do it mechanically, with machines skilfully devised for the purpose; do it with less consciousness of impropriety than they would feel in killing so many pigeons. The shedding of all this blood seems as blameless as the pouring out of so much water. It had been reprehensible to have spilled only so much if there had been a possibility of spilling more. But if two men between whom lie greivous wrongs meet on the street, or even in a retired spot, and fight till one or the other dies, the survivor is brought to trial charged with a capital offense. Here seems to be an amazing inconsistency. The soldier, to be sure, is not censurable for the carnage he inflicts; he, like his weapon, is merely a mechanical agent in the business. He has not planned the combat; he has not brought on the war. But somebody has. The governments concerned, one or both of them, have done all that; and a government, murderous as it may be, can hardly be arraigned in court and tried for its life. Unfortunately nobody but

the socialists seems to think that it should be, unless the war has been exceptionally disastrous. But ulterior success, or the lack of it, has no bearing on the moral quality of wholesale slaughter.

#### THE EVILS OF WAR

The evils of war have ever been all too lightly esteemed. Even its flagrantly obvious abominations have not yet sunk deep enough into the minds of most persons to evoke anything like a due abhorrence. The subject needs a fresh and exhaustive study in all its bearings, by competent authorities, the weight of whose names might give to their researches power to create a juster public sentiment on this subject, and sway especially the minds of those who sit in high places. We get some general notion of the horrors by reading accounts given by eye-witnesses of battles on land and sea; from reflecting on the destructiveness of the enginery now employed and the skill developed in the use of it; in noting the reported loss of men and of material. Especially is an impression made by such a masterly presentation of the subject as we have in *Die Waffen nieder* of the Baroness von Suttner, the spell of the gifted storyteller reaching wide among the people and engendering an enlightened public sentiment as nothing else can. But no picture, no estimate of losses, no harrowing tale, can adequately set forth the facts. Of the waste of property an idea can be got from the record of ships sunk, of towns, bridges, railroads, crops destroyed, of commerce interfered with, of normal

labor suspended, of increase in the public debt. But the loss in what are euphemistically called the "casualties" is only partly told by the official figures. The soldiers and sailors, we must remember, are picked men, young, sound, and in a way skilled. What the slaughter of some hundreds of thousands of these means to a country is very imperfectly indicated by the figures, imposing as they are. There is inflicted an impoverishment not to be made up by the birth and growth to manhood of as many more boys; allowance must be made for the percentage there will be in the new generation not up to the standard; and any wholesale cutting off of picked men infallibly increases that percentage. Just what is the actual deterioration a people suffers in this letting down of the average inheritance of virility through the offering of a mighty holocaust of its best to the god of war, we are not yet in a position to say, but that it is very considerable there can be no doubt.

Then, whatever to the contrary men taken with outward show may say, there results from every war, for victors as well as vanquished, a moral subsidence, a spiritual decline in some respects if not in all. This comes out in an enfeebled sense of the value of human life; in a lessened regard for property rights induced by habits of pillage and destruction; in a disinclination to resume a career of sober industry; in irregularities of all sorts to which the nomadic life of the soldier conduces. The lowering of the moral tone in the United States by means of the war with Spain was plain to all but the wilfully blind.

To mention only one of the evidences of this detriment: Before the war prize-fighting was quite universally in disrepute, was prohibited by law, and a contest could only be had surreptitiously in some dark corner, or, if publicity was desired, in some far western wilderness. The war changed all that; and naturally enough, for if the mighty Yankee nation could properly fall foul of Spain, strip her of her possessions and pound her within an inch of her life, there could be nothing so very reprehensible in two men standing up before an assembly and trying something of the kind on each other. The thing began at once to be spoken of with approval; we heard even popular clergymen — good fellows, too — freely say they “would like to see a prize-fight pulled off to the finish.” With such outspoken encouragement from the pillars of society, the opportunity was not wanting; or if there was still some lingering question of propriety in the way, these respectable sports could regale themselves on a graphically detailed report in the morning papers, and shortly witness a kinematographic representation. Happily there are signs that this degradation is stayed. In most of our States this sort of entertainment is coming to be considered reprehensible.

As between peace and war, a preference will commonly be expressed for peace, but only a preference. ‘Ordinarily,’ we are told, ‘peace is the better condition, but war, too, is good for a change. It develops courage, fortitude, pluck; exalts the spirit of patriotism; makes a nation great. See what it

did for Rome, what it has done for Germany, for Japan!' But we must remember that the triumph of one nation has always carried with it the humiliation of another; that a gain here has meant a loss there. From the foundation of the world, in the fierce warring of the nations, as of cannibals, the exigency of the situation, put in plain words, has been, 'Eat, or be eaten!' and the very pertinent question now arises whether really there is much to choose between the horns of this hideous dilemma. As for the need of war to bring out any high traits in man, there is nothing to be said for that doctrine which would not also be an argument for dueling, for street-fighting, for all sorts of physical combats. Following that line of reasoning we should have to say that certain of the acts that take men to the penitentiary and to the gallows are acts conducive to the development of valuable human traits, acts that lift men out of their effeminacy. But courts commonly take another view, though some governors appear to grant pardons on some such theory.

#### COST OF MILITARY PREPARATIONS

The chancelleries of Europe take every occasion to express their confidence in the continuation of peace, and assure us that their constant aim is to assure that end. But nobody trusts them, and least of all do they trust one another. While acclaiming the perpetuity of peace they keep right on straining every nerve in elaborate and prodigiously expensive preparations for war. Not the dreaded Napoleon himself

spent for armaments one-half what any one of the great powers is now spending in time of profound peace. What this ever-climbing, already mountainous tax is coming to is the gravest problem in politics to-day. Under the conduct of the present governing parties, or any parties likely soon to take their places, there seems no chance of any limit being set to war expenses (even when there is no war) short of the complete exhaustion of national resources. Germany aspires to snatch from England her proud title of "mistress of the seas," and rivalry in the building of the most costly structures ever put afloat grows more and more intense. It is coming to be seriously asked how much higher naval appropriations can be carried without invoking an economic catastrophe. Indeed it may well be asked whether right here, rather than in any development of capitalism in the industries, the existing order of society is not rushing, as if impelled by an irresistible fate, upon its own destruction. The craze for more powerful armaments dominates the governments, carries all before it, ever augmenting an already crushing burden, and all to no purpose so far as making any relative gain in strength is concerned. Apparently there is no end to it save in overwhelming disaster.

While England was easily the richest, most resourceful of the powers, her naval supremacy looked unapproachable and was quietly acquiesced in; but now that, through the great advance in the art of construction which makes of a war-ship little less than a floating fortress, the sea has come to outvie

the land as a theater of military operations, and now that other nations have become as rich or richer, and greatly more populous, there is disinclination to yield longer to her boast of outranking in naval strength any two other powers combined. But England holds it a vital necessity of her insular situation to maintain this superiority, and she will double the home taxes, call on her colonies, exploit the myriads of India and Africa to their last shirt and their last mouthful of rice, sooner than renounce her proud distinction. Remote indeed, so long as the present order of things endures, is the possibility of any agreement restricting military preparations. The thing to fear is that, wearied out with the burden of these colossal expenditures, rulers and tax-payers will imbibe the spirit of jingoism, and unleash the dogs of war, — driven to the conclusion that it is cheaper, more practicable to sweep other fleets from the sea than to go on increasing the strength of their own at such a ruinous rate.

That this is a strong and growing English feeling toward Germany, reciprocated ardently by the bellicose government of that country and prompting a feverish haste in making ready for the onset, is only too apparent. Do we need to wait for the outbreak of hostilities to be convinced of the sheer sophistry of the talk we hear to the effect that the surest way to keep the peace unbroken is to multiply the preparations for war? That foolishness is of a piece with the pretense that unless we have a fight now and then we must all become chicken-hearted poltroons.



## THE SOCIALIST ATTITUDE AND THE GROUNDS OF IT

In the midst of these precarious conditions there is one party, and only one, that everywhere stands for peace. That is the socialist party. The carrying out of its programme would take away all occasion for war, would mean the abolition of standing armies, put an end to the building of war-ships, make frowning fortifications look as antiquated and useless as ruined castles on the Rhine. In the meantime and while the great ruling parties, countenanced by bishops and other clergy, delay the hour "when swords shall be beaten into ploughshares" and cannon rolled into building material, socialists are, to the best of their ability, opposing war and all that makes for war. This opposition has its special grounds which may be pointed out.

1. Socialists are an international party, a fact which puts them morally head and shoulders above parties which are only national, provincial, local. They are of a world-wide fellowship, a brotherhood of the toilers of every land; and it does not accord with their feelings or their sense of propriety to be forced, and to have some of these brothers forced, into mutually hostile armies, in due time to be set face to face, and, for no other reason than that their governors have fallen out, be made to "shoot the souls out of one another." The proceeding takes on an appearance hideously like murdering one's own household. For these men, it may be, have met and counseled together in international assemblies, found themselves holding the same views, stirred by the

same hopes for the human world, consecrated by a like devotion to one and the same cause; at any rate they have been swept by the spirit of this universal movement, and if their bodies have never crossed the frontier, their minds have. They know that theirs is a fraternity of all nations. And just this experience has largely unfitted them for the calling of arms. And not only so, it has brought them to feel that the calling is one to which, except under the most extraordinary circumstances, the least possible service should be given by anybody. Nations, they will think, should come into closer relations with one another, develop mutual sympathies, form alliances, establish international courts and congresses, set up machinery for settling their misunderstandings, analogous to that to which individuals resort in their disagreements.

Because socialists have this wider view they are impatient of the system which perpetuates into our day the old barbaric arbitrament of the sword, which practically gives the case to the physically stronger on his own terms — proceeding void of even a semblance of justice, and characterized from the beginning by shameless conquest, perfidy, and outrage.

2. In the next place the working-man is not such a devoted vassal as he once was; not so self-effacing in the service of the high and mighty. He is coming to see that wars are generally waged in the interest of princes and politicians; that while the poor man bears the brunt and takes the peril, the rich get the prizes if there are any. As his eyes are opened to

the one-sidedness of this arrangement, he naturally shrinks from entering into it. 'If anybody is to fight,' he says, 'let those do it who have something to gain by it. Why should they call on me?' The poor man, however, has no choice in the matter; he is in the hands of his masters, and they will do with him what they will. So when war breaks out, there he is in the ranks, contrary to his choice as it may be. But that does not prevent his having his opinions on the subject, nor always prevent his expressing them. For example, as is well known, many thousands in the French army are pronouncedly anti-militarist, and no little apprehension is felt by the government as to the use they will make of their guns if ever they are brought into battle. What did any war ever avail to the common soldier? In substantial results, nothing, verily, beyond a possible pension. The sole pretense is that the service covers him, even in death, with inestimable reward — wreaths of undying glory. That sounding phrase is as hollow as the heads of the militant orators from whose mouths it flows, as hollow as the drums whose beating drowns the groans of agonizing thousands; and people whose ancestors died unhonored and sleep forgotten on many a battlefield are wondering how anybody was ever deceived by such pompous nonsense. What glory there was in the fighting went to the commanders, and only they have so much as their names remembered. The day is coming when even they, for the most part, may well wish that they too had been forgotten with all the humble whom they led to death. As for the

socialist working-man, he has attained the discretion to discount at 100 per cent. the talk about war covering his kind with imperishable glory.

3. The socialist is also averse to war because to him it is unseemly and immoral. He reprobates it as a heightened and intensified form of the evils ordinarily seen in the present social system. In times of what we call peace men are relentlessly preying upon one another, waging a bloodless sort of warfare, gathering up booty, worsting or getting worsted, plucking or being plucked. But over it all is spread a covering of civility, even of Christian grace and charity. Whatever lying, trickery, injustice, heartlessness is practiced, there is maintained a theory of uprightness, of truth, of honor, of generosity even; the tribute of hypocrisy to virtue is lavishly, ostentatiously paid. The man who beats you out of your last dollar to-day, will subscribe liberally to-morrow to some benevolent object, of which, perhaps, he knows nothing, but which you know to be worthy. But war lays off this fine veil of seemly form, is avowedly, unblushingly, as bad in profession as in practice, frankly deceptive, rapacious, blood-thirsty; robbing and killing to the utmost. So the socialist opposes it as an exaggeration of what is worst in society as seen from day to day — the overreaching, the underhandedness, the deceit in business, the contention of rivals, the bitterness of competition where it is bad, and the crushing of it where it is good.

Socialism, when it comes to be realized in the world, will abolish war for good and all, by abolishing the

causes of war. It will take away from any man or coterie the terrible power to precipitate a conflict putting in jeopardy the lives and fortunes of millions. It will enthrone the democracy, while at the same time seeing to it that the democracy is enlightened beyond the danger of being captured by designing demagogues. It will take down the tariff walls now built about most nations — menacing sign of unfriendliness — leaving all peoples free to exchange any good thing of which they produce a surplus for whatever else they most need. By the same act it will remove the dangerous rivalry of the nations for the trade of the ends of the earth, unrestricted friendly intercourse giving all products the chance to find their market where they are most wanted. It will make a community of nations, with a World Congress to confirm or reject laws of international import, and a High Court of the Nations to dispose of all grievances. These bodies will have no such overwhelming task as would come to them under circumstances now existing; as, in fact, will be the case with all legislative and jural functionaries. The political State will decline in importance as the social-industrial State rises, and, as a consequence, international differences will come to be of rare occurrence and of easy adjustment. The new harmony between the nations will be of the same nature and derive from the same sources as the harmony to be established between individuals when the artificial incitements to envy and greed, covetousness and grasping, robbery and murder are abolished.

## CHAPTER X

### SOCIALISM THE ENFRANCHISEMENT OF WOMAN

We have seen in a general way something of the pernicious effect of the present system of society on the ways of men, the distressing contrasts it produces among them, the handicap a sensitive conscience is in the struggle for the prizes, the inevitable crowding of the scrupulous souls and weaker frames to the wall. It remains to point out how, in the nature of the case, these adverse results fall with the greatest severity upon women, and how their situation calls loudest of all for the great economic reformation.

With the iniquity inherent in its nature, capitalism bears hardest upon the most defenseless, rewards those least who do the most repulsive tasks, tramples with extremest heartlessness upon those whose abject dependence bars them from making even a protesting outcry. So the system, which has no conscience and no consciousness, seizes upon the whole feminine half of humanity as particularly suited to exploitation. Given the system, the sad fact is unescapable, and, like all the other miseries entailed thereby, is chargeable to individuals only in a measure and in its worst excesses. Woman, normally more sensitive in spirit, more delicate in physique than her brothers, enters little into the scramble for wealth, seldom becomes a capitalist employer of labor, is largely barred from the ambitious activities to which men not hopelessly

weighted down are apt to aspire. She is very infrequently seen conducting a business of any sort. Even the shops exclusively patronized by women, and where women do all the work, are usually owned and managed by men. Caring for her own property, if she has any considerable amount, is more than meets the approval of her advisers; and to have an office and regular business-hours causes general remark and subjects her to the imputation of masculinity, which is more than she can well stand. Hindrances of a more formidable sort block the way to a profession. To be sure she can teach in primary and secondary schools; but, though apt to be more gifted in imparting instruction than are men, she rarely advances to a college position no matter how superior her qualifications. The way into the legal profession and the way into the pulpit are almost closed to her; and the practice of medicine is only somewhat less exclusively a masculine preserve hedged about by custom. To shut her out from much activity in politics the ballot is almost everywhere withheld from her, and with it eligibility to office. This has the double result of narrowing the range of her thought and rendering nugatory any influence she may seek to exert on the powers that be; for legislators and other officials are directly answerable only to the voters, and feel bound to show to non-voters nothing beyond courtesy,—in which negative attitude they will feel braced by any lack of astuteness betrayed by the disfranchised class, all unpracticed in politics as they are.



## DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN AS WAGE-EARNERS

Unmarried women in great part, practically all who are not in the enjoyment of some financial independence, are wage-earners, dependent beyond any corresponding class of men in the degree that their wages are less. The lower the wage the nearer life is to slavery, and the shame of the age is that everywhere for identical service women get less pay than men. Whatever the work, however the nature of it precludes the possibility that it can be better done by men, discrimination more or less pronounced is made. In printing-offices women's work cannot be much less worth than men's, but reports show a wide disparity in the wages of the sexes. From Great Britain we have these examples: "In Perth and Bungay the women put in a bill at the end of each week, worked out on the men's scale of rates. The cashier then divides the total by two and pays the women accordingly. In Edinburgh women's piece-rates for composing average about two-thirds those of men. At Warrington women do machine ruling for prices ranging from 15s. to 20s., whilst men are paid 32s. for same work." \* A Manchester employer estimated that in a printers and stationers' warehouse a woman is two-thirds as valuable as a man, at the same time admitting that he paid the women half as much as the men. But women, single and married, are glad to get even a

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\* *Women in the Printing Trades*, p. 47.

moiety of what men are paid in this trade, as that amounts to more than they can earn in most callings. In the thirty-one divisions of labor into which the making of cycles and accessories is classified, the average weekly earnings of girls under eighteen run from 5s. 6d. to 9s. 2d.; those of girls over eighteen and married women, from 10s. to 12s. In some of the thirty-two divisions of labor with jewelers and silversmiths, girls under eighteen average 4s. and less a week, the older ones in some of the other divisions averaging as low as 9s. "It is generally taken for granted both by men and women that a man *ought* to receive more than a woman. . . . The woman earns less than the man, not merely because she necessarily produces less, but apparently because her wages are fixed at a comparatively lower level just because she is a woman. . . . Whatever the reason why the rate is not higher, the fact seems to be that the limit is set against further reduction of women's wages by the sorry fact that the very existence of the women as workers demands at least the present level, for as a matter of fact even the present level is not sufficient for a girl or woman to realize the standard of comfort of the working classes, low though that is, unless the woman is subsidized to some extent, or gets a further income in some way or other. Any one acquainted with working-class life knows the low standard to which the widow, or the single girl left without friends, is obliged to adhere." \*

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\* *Women's Work and Wages*, pp. 134, 136.

Because in most industries women can be hired to do a given amount of work for considerably less than men's wages, there results to some extent a displacement of men to make room for them. Stenography, for example, has almost wholly gone into their hands, because of the reduction of expenses effected for employers. In some of the productive industries tendency to a similar transference has been noted. Bebel quotes from the *Lewiston (Maine) Journal* a curious illustration of the consequences: "One of the *features* of the factory towns of Maine is a class of men that may be termed 'housekeepers.' In almost every town where much factory work is done these men are to be found in large numbers. Whoever calls shortly before noon will find them with aprons tied in front, washing dishes. At other hours of the day they can be seen scrubbing, making the beds, washing the children, tidying up the place, or cooking." In explanation of this social phenomenon we are told that the wives have employment in the factories. Bebel says the same thing happens in Germany also.\* But it may be questioned that the husbands either in Germany or in England, even when out of employment, turn their hands much to housework. Where the woman works in a factory through the day, according to English testimony, "she accepts it as right that she should do all the housework at night while the man amuses himself in any way he

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\* *Woman under Socialism*, p. 170. Singularly misleading title of an eminently successful book which says next to nothing of woman under socialism.

thinks fit. And often where a working-man assists his wife in household duties he does not like his mates to know." \*

#### GENERAL DISLIKE OF DOMESTIC SERVICE

In our country where the native young working-people, whether men or women, have not to any great extent come frankly to accept a life of drudgery, there is a strong disposition to avoid the trades and take to employments rated more genteel, or at least less in the nature of common manual toil. There is with our young women a marked disinclination to domestic service, notwithstanding its offer of comparatively good wages, and to all kinds of handiwork which, taking them out of the current of life, doom them to a humdrum existence and the badge of servility. If they are to serve they prefer to do it under circumstances that obscure rather than proclaim the fact — in a restaurant where there is bustle, and the servant is lost in the crowd of the served. The place of saleswoman, poorly as it is generally paid, has its attractions; its show of some democratic equality gives a sense of being in the world. The great stores are overrun with applicants for any place, and have need to offer only the most derisory salaries. But how is a young woman, who must at least be presentably gowned, to live on a merely nominal stipend of three or four dollars a week? It is clearly impossible to do it unless she has a home with parents

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\* *Women's Work and Wages*, p. 137.

or friends. For those not so subsidized the situation is beset with perils so grave as to constitute in itself — considering the nature of the average man and of men below the average — *a priori* ground of suspicion, multiplying out of bounds the unprofitableness of it.

Out of these straits in which certainly many find themselves, if one is not to fall into the trap which capitalism sets for the feet of the unwary, there is ordinarily but one way of escape, and that is by the gate of matrimony — an escape that may or may not prove worth making. The misery of the poor woman's lot lies in her dependence, and from this she is not always delivered in getting a husband. The form of it is changed, but it remains an evil. The wife is seldom made to feel that she by her household-toil is a contributor to the maintenance of the family; unless she finds a "gainful" occupation, the husband is called and considers himself the breadwinner, sole support of the household, though his work be greatly less repellent and less prolonged than hers, and no whit more indispensable. The social organism, in the prevailing conception, instead of being socialistic, as the term would imply, having the family as its unit, is individualistic; that is, has the individual for its starting-point. Moreover, that individual is the man; woman at most is an accessory. This conception is of the essence of selfishness, contemplates no interest of the race or of the community, takes the family for an obstruction to the main purpose, a burden, into the assumption of which

Nature decoys the unsuspecting for ends which are widely removed from the individual concernment.

SOCIAL DISTINCTIONS SHARPEST AMONG WOMEN

Society in the narrower sense of the word is woman's particular field, but society in this sense rests on individual tastes and ambitions, personal aims, likings, attachments, which form coteries but not communities, are affiliative within definitely limited circles, divisive in an unlimited beyond. Without the motives to seek wide acquaintanceship and cordial relations with the largest possible number of persons which political and business sagacity naturally awakens in men, women are led by wholly other motives to pride themselves on the selectness, the exclusiveness of their circle of acquaintance, and so live much more closely hemmed-in by social distinctions. There results a social differentiation of the sexes generally observable, and coming out very decidedly here and there.

Coming into the possession of wealth usually makes no great change in the bearing of a man toward other men; we do not expect to see him putting on airs of superiority, forsaking old friends, showing any aloofness to old associates; he will not ordinarily become idle or indolent, or suddenly require a bevy of servants to attend to his personal wants. He is apt to work harder even than before; his cares are greater, his concerns more important. But the reverse of all this is likely to happen with his wife. And so the modifications in the two personalities consequent

upon the same cause are widely different. Both are changed, but in ways how unlike! Can there be any question that the man's development is more normal than the woman's?

PRESENT DISPARITY OF THE SEXES IN MENTAL POWER  
WHENCE IT COMES AND HOW TO ABOLISH IT

Looking on the world as it is, seeing the work done by the two sexes, what they each are ready to undertake, what they each accomplish, it is hard for even the most chivalrous to withhold in his own heart (however he may refrain from voicing) assent to the verdict some one now and then is blunt enough to render, that woman is the inferior party. We are not, however, absolutely left to this disagreeable conclusion. What, beyond reasonable dispute has happened under the forms of society that have prevailed, and especially under the capitalist régime, is a great distortion of the female type. Granted that the average woman shows a mental grasp below that of the average man, the fact is amply accounted for by the limited use of her faculties to which social conditions have restricted her. Without asserting that acquired aptitudes of mind in one sex tend to be transmitted to that sex,\* it is plain that a special course of discipline in youth, and rigorously distinct

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\* This, however, is not to be construed as a questioning of that contention. Sex heredity, *i. e.*, the tendency of boys to inherit the qualities of the father, girls the qualities of the mother, seems to be fairly well established. For a full discussion of the matter see Dr. Densmore's *Sex Equality*.



occupations, opportunities, and privileges in life, must create marked differences. The sex that as a whole suffers abridgment of its theater of action, of its rights and privileges, must of necessity, as a whole, show the effect in diminished power of thought, in puerilities and "effeminacies," which the other sex may take note of, but cannot deride without self-stultification, once the cause is made apparent. Women have so long been debarred from the activities which most call for and develop strength of mind, that strong-mindedness, proud a quality as it is to predicate of a man, applied to a woman is, and has been since the word was invented, a term of reproach. So it remains, notwithstanding the pains we are taking, regardless of cost, to give our girls equal opportunities with the boys for education in the schools — education whose one legitimate purpose is to give strength of mind.

The utility of this training in nine cases out of ten, to speak within bounds, is called in question by the lack of occasion to make more than a very limited use of either the knowledge or the discipline acquired. Possibly the girl graduate may become a better wife and mother for her studies, but her course of study is no more arranged for that end than the boy's is for making a good husband and father. The course for both contemplates a preparation for the duties of citizenship, conduct of public as well as private affairs; fits for, or at least leads up toward, some professional career. To the young man college training is a step directly forward into an active life; to

the young woman it generally brings up to nothing in particular; she is apt to find the way blocked to services for which her education has specially fitted her, and as a consequence can only drop back into the common, aimless life from which she may have hoped to emerge. What is left to her is what custom leaves to practically the whole sisterhood: petty social affairs, the art of dressing, the study of fashions, the reading of novels, if she is an heiress; otherwise, household toil, various handiwork, school-teaching, possibly authorship if she has the knack, as one in ten thousand may have; for the great mass not much that is inspiring, ennobling.

#### COMMERCIALIZING THE SEX-RELATION

The upshot of it all is a pretty much universal feeling of dependence, which is chiefly responsible for the sordid, calculating motive to marriage so controlling in these days. To say that a woman has "done well" matrimonially means first of all that she has caught a husband able to support her. Not but that the case may be reversed, whatever may be thought of it; not that men are above "marrying money," though this is felt to be more particularly the woman's rôle, she being supposed to have in her charms something to offset the cash. Hence the exercise of sex-fascination is the end to which in our boasted civilization all female nurture, discipline, culture, art, and artifice lead up.

That in this business there is great demoralization, that open and hideous vice takes its heavy tribute,

that abominations unspeakable develop and flourish, — these are matters of course. Woman in her pitiable dependence, in her weakness induced by social conditions, treated as a “cross between angel and idiot,” flattered, courted, exploited, trodden under foot, bears, and has borne through the ages, the awful burden of a world’s sins. And to cap all, to these admitted horrors must be added the further admission, in theory and in practice on all hands fully and freely made, that under the existing social system there is absolutely no remedy.

The situation has been struggled with time out of mind. All that religion, civil authority, private and organized philanthropy, could do, under the conditions, has been done, and yet the *demi-monde*, as the ironical term is, has probably not been reduced in dimensions even relatively to the whole population one iota. No iniquity resorted to in old Roman days to replenish it but that has been, and is being, outdone all around this Christian world. Bebel a quarter of a century ago pointed to the crime of white slavery,\* showing it up as the legitimate offspring

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\*“The traffic in female flesh has assumed mammoth proportions. It is conducted on a most extensive scale, and is most admirably organized in the very midst of the seats of civilization and culture, rarely attracting the notice of the police. A swarm of brokers, agents, carriers, male and female, ply the trade with the same unconcern as if they dealt in any other merchandise. Birth certificates are forged, and bills of lading are drawn up with accurate descriptions of the qualifications of the several ‘articles’ and are handed over to the carriers as directions for the purchasers. As

of capitalism, telling of the extent to which it was then carried, and how his own Germany was being ravaged, as was Africa by a previous generation of slave-hunters, to furnish supplies for the hideous trade; and still, in spite of prohibitory laws and organized effort to stamp out the traffic, it goes on as then, only a little more under cover, a monstrous feature of the existing order of things.

If we look things squarely in the face and speak out plainly we shall see and admit that the unspeakable horror of this thing, as of the whole blot of prostitution, has some faint reflection, to say the least, in the way marriages are not uncommonly contracted in our respectable society. Wives, to be sure, are not in so many words bought and sold, but in how many cases does the union of a pair turn on financial considerations! How often is a marriage determined by the gain in fortune it will bring to one or the other party! And when this betterment is the main or sole reason for entering into "holy matrimony," how is the proceeding not a moral abomination, in its measure comparable to that we have been considering? As Dr. Densmore well says: "To be free from all commercial taint it is necessary that one

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with all merchandise, the price depends upon the quality, and the several categories are assorted and consigned according to the taste and requirements of the customers in different places and countries. The slyest manipulations are resorted to in order to evade the snares and escape the vigilance of the police; not infrequently large sums of money are used to shut the eyes of the guardians of the law."—*Woman under Socialism*, p. 157.

seeking an ideal marriage, whether the seeker be man or woman, be in a position of financial independence, inherited or acquired. . . . Custom and precedent have much to do with our perception of right and wrong. Since our otherwise most advanced people give their daughters to husbands who are able or who promise to provide a comfortable living, the custom of bartering them on this basis has become established; and while multitudes of mothers are seeking such bargains for their daughters, multitudes of daughters are co-operating in such pursuit, both without thinking — custom has so blinded them — of the similarity of their quest to that “social evil” so repugnant that we instinctively shrink from pronouncing its name. . . . Without financial independence or adequate earning power, a woman often finds herself in the dilemma of either accepting a worldly marriage unsanctified by love, or facing penury with all the misery it entails. . . . In whatever light this matter is viewed, and however unpleasant the thought, it is obvious that there is some analogy between the social evil and that marriage which the woman has sought as a means of livelihood. One is a temporary promiscuous relation, the other is sought by the woman as a permanent relation, and while on her part usually free from promiscuity, it nevertheless remains true that both these relations are sought by woman as a source of gain, or broadly as a means of livelihood. Surely this is a condition to be deplored by every right-thinking, pure-minded person. It will be seen on analysis that this stage

of dependence and quasi-slavery on the part of the woman carries in its train a blight not unlike that engendered by Negro-slavery. . . . And as the former slave-holder rejoices to-day that Negro-slavery has been abolished, will not the day come when the very men who now would be most shocked to see their wives or sisters or daughters engaged in gainful pursuits, will be the first to rejoice in the full emancipation of woman?" \*

#### SOCIALISM THE ONE HOPE OF WOMAN IN THESE STRAITS

Full emancipation is possible only through financial independence, and this can hardly be acquired by woman so long as occupations for which she is or can be fitted are closed to her, or open only at lower wages than are paid men for the same work. This adverse discrimination must be done away with, and that just equality of conditions established which inclines to favor rather than to exploit the weaker party. Certain it is that women are never going to effect such a revolution for themselves. They have neither the power nor the class-instinct requisite to accomplish it. The only sure promise of its coming is through the triumph of socialism, the one world-wide political movement which openly declares for equal rights and privileges.

Concession of equal rights and privileges must carry with it equal responsibilities, conditioned only by

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\* *Sex Equality*, pp. 208, 347f.

temporarily disabling circumstances to which femininity is subject. The whole conception of woman's sphere needs to be revolutionized to rid it, not of injustice only, but of rank inconsistency with itself. Especially confused is the prevailing idea of what is due to woman as such. In one sphere, she is petted, idolized, adored; men toil early and late to keep her in jeweled ease, "free from care, from labor free," free also to spend without restriction for the gratification of her taste or her caprice. In another sphere, she is the humble servant of my lady, the menial to whom no deference is due, or the common drudge, getting worse treatment than the rudest working-man. Relieving one class of women of every form of labor and putting the whole burden on another class, produces the most astounding incongruities; lifts one, inferior perhaps in body and in mind, to be the envy of other women, the object of an obsequious masculine homage, and leaves to neglect another, fitted it may be for any place. The ordinary mark of high caste among women is freedom from any dust of toil. To work, to be of any real use in the world, thwarts the aim for social distinction. The young woman who earns her own living feels it to be a humiliation, and looks forward to a marriage which will relieve her of that badge of mediocrity. But from a socialist point of view these are pernicious habits of thought. For any one to live without work is to violate the principle of equality; it is to lay upon another person an undue share of toil. It is to make oneself dependent on



the labor of others, living or dead; and dependence is a state to be avoided as far as possible. Every person who goes through the world should personally contribute at least enough to pay his passage; it was never intended that there should be any dead-heads. If woman is to have equality with man in rights and privileges, there will inevitably fall to her equality of duties and responsibilities.

Instead of its being a credit to live without work, entitling him who succeeds in doing so to distinction as a superior sort of person, one to be looked up to and envied, it is essentially a discredit, and ought rather to lower one's rank. Were all men and women to share in the world's work, the amount of labor that would necessarily fall to each would be no burden, would be only the measure of exercise conducive to good health. There would be an end of the prejudice so many feel against labor, and of the scorn ungratefully meted out for the poor creatures who by their drudgery enable others to keep their hands so soft and so white.

With the coming of equality the notion will have to give way that the woman is to be supported by the man. It will be recognized that the maintenance of the household—so far as not assumed by the collectivity—belongs alike to both. Where, as is increasingly the case, no house-keeping duties are assumed by the newly married woman, she will cheerfully continue in any gainful occupation she had before pursued, contributing as matter of course to

the family income. If it is housekeeping she does, that will equally be counted as contributory to the same end.

Socialism proposes to give woman an equal chance with man. Full civil and political rights are to be secured to her, all fields of activity opened. Work done, whether of the hand or of the head, is to be estimated and paid for on its merits as work, with no deduction on the ground of its being woman's work. For interferences with her ordinary activities arising from her feminine constitution and functions, she is not to be fined by a stoppage of pay; society will hold that these disablements are in all fitness a communal, not a personal, charge; and will see that the burden, so far as is humanly possible, be taken from the individual. Maternity will be recognized as a high public service, to be rewarded out of the public purse, as are other great and perilous undertakings contributory to the world's upbuilding. The State will come fully to perceive that it has the chief stake in the children, and will not limit its provision for them to their education; it will assume the whole charge of their bringing up under the mother's eye. The girls and boys will have much the same life as now, save that the gross inequalities of fortune, which at present are such a vexation and perplexity to the little ones, will not be thrust in their faces. When they come to the end of their school days, the girls, become young women entering upon active life, will not find themselves suddenly discriminated against as

compared with the young men. All careers to which they may aspire will be open to them on equal terms with their brothers. It will not be thought unseemly for them to take part in the election of public officers, or to be themselves elevated to places of trust should such be the voice of the people. Thus will mothers and daughters be wholly delivered from the humiliating dependency which now so enfeebles and deforms the womanly nature.

That an equal chance and fair play would produce a transformation of the feminine half of the world, nobody doubts, not even timorous conservatives; but they apprehend that the change would be for the worse. They do not believe in liberty, dare not trust equality; grudgingly admit that any gain has thus far come from the movement in that direction since the days when men captured wives as they did other game. While no one is competent to say beforehand just what will result from a great social innovation, it seems not too much to expect that the full application in law and custom of the principles of equal rights, equal privileges, equal opportunities, will tend strongly to bring about equality between man and woman; not absolute likeness of mind and spirit, which is wholly undesirable — but such an uplift of womankind through a veritable independence attained, such a strengthening of characteristic qualities most to be valued, and such an awakening of now half-dormant powers, as to end forever all talk of the inferiority of woman to man. What will be seen

may be called an unbalanced equality, that is to say, equality on the whole, coupled with various inequality as to particulars, each party keeping an acknowledged leadership in one respect and another, owing in part, perhaps, to ineffaceable sex-distinctions, and in part, certainly, to an undeniable difference of spheres, capable, to be sure, of retrenchment, but which no degree of liberty and no social evolution can ever altogether abolish.

Distortions of human nature incident to unjust exactions and artificially imposed disabilities, will be overcome, no doubt, when the causes are removed; but no one will pretend to say that under the most perfect regulations women, any more than men, are to escape all the follies into which they at present fall. The strongest of all passions will here and there get beyond control in the future, as it has in the past, but less commonly, less inevitably. Evil in this world — and presumably in any other — is by utmost effort to be lessened, not abolished. It is a reasonable expectation that, with the establishment of woman's independence, the hideous fatality of temptation will be removed, and the chief spring of the "social evil" be dried up. Great furtherance in the same direction will come from the check that will be put upon luxury — always a fecund source of moral debasement — by a leveling power which, while it benignantly bids the valleys rise, will say imperiously, "Bow down, ye mountains!" Rich men and men in high places, as no one needs to be told, are

apt to assume that they are absolved from certain restraints which society imposes upon the commonalty, and by the license they take, and take with the quasi-acquiescence of society, exercise a baleful influence upon a class of young women vain enough and dependent enough to be flattered by the attentions of the upper class. This is one of the chief curses of capitalism, as it was of feudalism, as it was of slavery, as it often has been of royalty; no less heinous now that the pampered of fortune must sue for favors, or purchase them, instead of taking them by prescriptive right.

#### GIVE WOMAN A CHANCE TO SHOW WHAT SHE CAN DO

What woman's capabilities in the mental world are remains as yet in great measure to be seen, since an essential condition of their coming to light is, a liberty of action hitherto largely withheld. But some striking intimations have been given. That she can match men in politics has been shown by Madame Roland, by Harriet Martineau, by Susan B. Anthony. Her power to out-talk her brothers in private has always been conceded; but what she can do in oratory is only beginning to be disclosed. That in this field she need hide no diminished head in the presence of the ablest of the other sex, must be admitted by those who have heard Lucretia Mott, or Julia Ward Howe, or Mrs. Ormiston Chant, or Mary A. Livermore, or Anna Howard Shaw, or Anna Garlin Spencer. Mary Somerville in astronomy, and Madame Curie in physics have shown that the highest walks of science

may be trod and its most enviable honors won by women. These masterful spirits, and scores beside, have pressed through doors left ajar and conquered whole kingdoms for women, who will follow them by the thousand when socialism shall have thrown the doors wide open. They will gain the place in science and scientific discovery, in art and architecture, in invention, in politics, and in various professions, which they already hold in music, in literature, and on the stage.

It will be no small thing for gifted spirits to gain the freedom of their wings and mount to airy heights of achievement; but a purer beneficence, answering to a more crying need, will reach to millions of the humbler sort of women toiling through long hours in factories or at trades, living from hand to mouth — and that only by close application — while the fruit of their labors enriches others; with no hope of better days, no idea that improvement of this hard old world is contemplated by anybody, or is indeed possible; strangers even to the socialistic “dream,” uncomforted through all their weary round by any promise of relief here below for them or their children after them to the remotest generation; stolid even to the fact of their own debasement, and repelling the hand stretched out to rescue them through a change of the social order. To these, who have not the far-vision, to whom it is not given to dwell upon the mountain-height and at the earliest hour look

“In the frank Dawn’s delighted eyes,”

and with a rapture known only to those who consort  
with air and sky as well as earth, see

“The first long surf of climbing light  
Flood all the thirsty east with gold,”

—to these “dwellers in the valley-land” no fore-  
gleams as yet come of the day of their redemption;  
but when that day does come, as come it will for  
all the world, what it will do for the lowly and the  
serving will be, to what it does for others higher  
up, as the verdure and flowers and fruits of the  
lowland are to all the snow-capped mountain has to  
give.



## CHAPTER XI

### SOCIALISM THE APPLIED ETHICS OF JESUS

The discussion here entered upon will not concern itself with any matters of criticism, higher or lower. The writer's or the reader's view of the personality involved, of his historicity even, has no bearing on the question before us, which is: How does socialism stand as an application of the moral teaching accredited to Jesus? This question at its narrowest is of immense import, as on its determination the judgment of socialism by the Christian church, which in all its many branches professes to found upon these teachings and to have for them an unbounded reverence, might reasonably be expected to turn. As Christians of one name and another easily constitute a majority of the civilized world, the whole church, once it is brought to see that a given theory of social organization is ethically in accordance with the words of the Master, that it puts into form his spirit, that it prepares the way for carrying out his precepts, would in reason be bound to pronounce for that theory, whereupon it must instantly be put in the way of realization. For such a logical result it is not necessary to make out that Jesus was a conscious socialist, and so called himself eighteen hundred years before the word "socialism" was coined in any tongue; all that needs be shown is that the ethical aim of social-

ism (as far as it goes) is identical with that of Christianity as Christianity was originally set forth.

#### JESUS ADDRESSED HIMSELF CHIEFLY TO THE POOR

In Jesus' conception of his mission he was sent especially to the poor. On his first appearance in his home synagogue after his baptism he stood up and read: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor; he hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." \* And repeatedly, as evidence of his fidelity to this mission, he points to the fact that "the poor have the gospel preached to them." † His attention was given to the poor almost exclusively, from a feeling, evidently, that their wrongs and their woes entitled them to it, that in view of the shocking inequalities in the outward circumstances of the people, it was his duty as the leader of a new era to do his utmost possible to balance the account. He found the poor, as has always been the case, suffering greatly more from disease than did the well-to-do, — a fact that appealed to him strongly, as appears from the record of his doings. The most of his time and energy seems to have been spent in looking after the sick and the unfortunate whom everybody else neglected. Nothing so aroused his indignation as

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\* Luke 4: 18, 19. See also Matt. 4: 23.

† Matt. 11: 5; Luke 6: 20; 7: 22.

the cold indifference of the wealthy class to all the misery about them. Their heartlessness drew out his fiercest invectives. Fiery denunciations, in strong contrast to the usual gentleness of his words, roll from his lips when he comes to speak of the rich and favored. He has no mercy on the respectable capitalists "who bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them upon men's shoulders," \* "who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers." † He abominates all this sort, to which, from a wide observation, he evidently thinks that, with rarest exception, the entire wealthy class belong ; saying vehemently : "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." ‡ So deeply is he stirred by the social situation, the luxury of the rich and their stolid unconcern about the wretchedness of the poor, that he takes the matter up in the most terrific of parables, and paints with no parsimony of coloring the future state of the capitalist. Though the picture burned itself into the minds of generations gone by, the neglect of the scriptures which has crept in of late is reason for here producing it entire :—

"Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day ; and a certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table ; yea, even the dogs came and licked his sores. And

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\* Matt. 20 : 4.

† Luke 20 : 47.

‡ Matt. 19 : 24.

it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died, and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now here he is comforted, and thou art in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, and they that would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us.' And he said, 'I pray thee, then, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house; for I have five brothers; that he may give earnest warning to them, that they too may not come to this place of torment.' But Abraham saith, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' But he said, 'Nay, father Abraham; but if one should go to them from the dead, they would repent.' And he said to him, 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, they will not be persuaded though one should rise from the dead.' " \*

The reader will note that the purpose of this fan-

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\* Luke 16: 19-31. This is not the place for critical or apologetic comment on a scripture quotation; but one cannot help saying that the provocation must indeed have been desperate which forced from the lips of the gentlest of men this most terrific of parables.

tasy is not to comfort the poor — represented in it by Lazarus — with a picture of future blessedness which is to make up for present hardships. The rôle of Lazarus is altogether secondary, the whole force of the parable turning on the fate of the rich man. Unlike pictures of Paradise since produced with a view to console the wretched and reconcile them to their lot in this world with visions of a reward hereafter, it is a picture of perdition to blanch the cheek of the capitalist who lives on the earnings of other people — people who may be driven at last to beg in the streets and rot at the gates of his palace.

A preacher who spoke in this way would naturally not draw many hearers from the upper classes. The audiences Jesus addressed are usually spoken of as "the multitude," a term which conveys, along with an idea of numbers, an implication that they were drawn from what we call "the masses." The later observation was: "Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble, are called ; but the foolish, the weak, the base things of the world, the things that are despised, did God choose, yea, and the things that are not, that he might bring to nought the things that are."\* The common people it was who heard Jesus gladly and made up his crowds. If others, the rich and titled, saw him, it was for the most part privately or in small companies.† The Christian congregation at the outset was as far as possible from being an assembly of nabobs, or an assembly subsidized by nabobs. The

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\* I. Cor. 1 : 26 ff.    † Luke 7 : 36 ; 18 : 18 ; John 3 : 1 ff.

reproach of the movement was that those who went into it were a common lot, a vulgar set. If ever any of the "better class" spoke well of Jesus, their associates would say: "Are ye also led astray? Have any of the rulers believed on him, or of the Pharisees? But this multitude that knoweth not the Law are accursed. Search, and ye will see that out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." \* But this superciliousness Jesus ignored; he was first of all a democrat, and no aristocratic scorn could at all shake him from his devotion to the people. "When he saw the multitude he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd." † His leveling doctrine is as radical as that of any socialist of our day. "Many who are first will be last," he said, "and the last first." Elsewhere he completely sets aside rank, as having no place in his democratic kingdom: "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his teacher, and the servant as his lord." ‡ For a yet more explicit statement of this socialistic doctrine see this: "Ye know that the rulers of the nations lord it over them, and their great men exercise a strict authority over them. Not so shall it be among you; but whoever desireth to become great among you, will be your minister; and whoever desireth to be first among you, will be your servant." § We begin

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\* John 7:47-49, 52. † Matt. 9:36.

‡ Matt. 10:24, 25; 19:30; Mark 9:35. § Matt. 20:25-27.

to see that Lowell knew whereof he spoke when he said, "There is dynamite enough in the New Testament, if legitimately applied, to blow all our existing institutions to atoms"; and that Laveleye's equivalent words came from good acquaintance with the gospels: "If Christianity were taught and understood conformably to the spirit of its Founder, the existing social order could not last a day."

Jesus in his practice did away with caste and class just as socialists propose to do, by lifting up the humble and despised. In order that he might approach the lowly with no show of condescension he "made himself of no reputation," poor as the poorest, dressed plainly, lived simply. From his known character, his wisdom and charm of speech, he was occasionally befriended by one of the upper class, even invited to dinner, — attentions which he welcomed that there might be no show of exclusiveness on his part.\* But the aristocratic never could get free from their exclusiveness, and reproached him on all occasions for having to do with low people, outcasts, and foreigners.† These wretches knew his benignity and followed him even into Pharisees' houses. The laborers, the burden-bearers, were the class that most drew upon his sympathy, and to them are addressed the tenderest expressions of regard. He insists that "the laborer is worthy of his living," but knows full well how scanty a living it often is, so many there are

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\* Luke 7:36; 11:37; 13:31.

† Matt. 9:10, 11; 11:19; Luke 7:39; 15:1, 2.



“who reap where they have not sown, and gather where they have not scattered”; and he calls to all the poor toilers: “Come to me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”; for in the kingdom that he would set up they who serve were to be the greatest.\* As under such a condition all would seek to make themselves of the utmost service, there could really be no tendency to distinctions of rank in that kingdom.

#### THE GOSPEL VIEW OF EARTHLY TREASURES

Jesus' fundamental principle in regard to objects of possession is, that there are things of more consequence than earthly treasures. Promptly he set this forth in the first enunciation of his gospel. In the Sermon on the Mount his earnest charge to the people is, not to become absorbed in the pursuit of riches, or, taking him at the letter, not to pursue them at all. This injunction is drowned in the bustle of modern commercialism and rendered almost nugatory;—it sounds to most ears (if it is ever heard) as the vamping of an idle dreamer devoid of practical sense. Looking down out of heaven upon us, he may well be saying:

“Who hath believed our report,  
And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

His charge is direct, specific, vigorous, extending to some length. It begins: “Lay not up for yourselves

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\* Matt. 11:28; 23:11.

treasures upon earth," striking straight at the pursuit in which almost the entire Christian world is engaged, Christians being out of comparison more absorbed in it than are, or ever were, the heathen. But Jesus is precise, pointed, and there is no interpreting away the force of his words. Elsewhere he pours a more furious scorn upon the holding of private property to any considerable extent, long antedating Proudhon in regarding it a crime, and deeming it heavily punishable in the next world if not in this. "Woe to you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation." \* Wealth is a poison which corrupts what it touches; it is fretted by moths and consumed by rust; it gives "the evil eye" which works maliciously and fills one's whole being with darkness; the quest of it is Mammon-worship, foul and damnable. The final plight of one who devotes himself to the accumulation of riches even in so honorable a way as we may suppose farming to be, is set forth in a parable:

"The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying,

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\* Luke 6:24. The sentiment is expanded in James 5:1-5:—"Come now, ye rich men, weep and wail for your miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are becoming moth-eaten; your gold and silver is rusted, and the rust of them will be a witness against you, and will eat your flesh as fire; ye have heaped up treasure in the last days! Behold, the hire of the laborers who reaped your fields, which is fraudulently kept back by you, crieth out; and the cries of those who reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Hosts. Ye have lived in luxury on the earth, and have been given to pleasure; ye have pampered your hearts in the day of slaughter."

‘What shall I do? for I have not where to store my crops.’ And he said, ‘This will I do; I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I store all my crops and my goods; and I will say to my soul: Soul, thou hast many goods laid up for many years; take thine ease; eat, drink, be merry.’ But God said to him: ‘Fool! this night will thy soul be required of thee; and whose will those things be which thou hast laid up?’” \*

Jesus manifests almost an abhorrence of money; is quite willing that Cæsar should take it in taxes. On sending out the twelve to preach, he warns them specifically: “Get no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses.” †

#### THE THINGS THAT ARE MOST WORTH

Over against these worldly things he set, as of infinitely more value, what he considered the true riches, the keeping of a good heart toward God and man. We are concerned here only with the ethical part of these treasures and the emphasis he put upon them, the whole stress of which is not to be brought out within the limits of this chapter, as it would involve the rehearsal of the great part of what the synoptists report him to have said. But proverbially long as is the moral law, the great masters have shown a genius for putting its essence in a few words, and so we have out of several ancient civilizations a practically identical summary of exceeding brevity independently pro-

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\* Luke 12:16-20.

† Matt. 10:9.

duced, going far to prove that the whole race is indeed made of one spiritual substance to dwell on all the face of the earth.\* The compend that Jesus gave, since known as the Golden Rule, may be taken on his own statement as implicating all binding moral obligations.† The then old commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," when he had freed it from Jewish restrictions and made it imply an equal duty to strangers and aliens, is an equivalent formula, and the two together constitute the basis of primitive Christian ethics.

The great enlargement given to the word "neighbor" by the parable of the Good Samaritan expressly to shape its interpretation in the commandment, has notable significance. That parable at one stroke breaks down the frowning partition-walls between the nations, and sets up a theory of the brotherhood of man. The Samaritans, though having a strain of Hebrew blood, were a people apart, with whom a Jew would have no dealings,‡ more alien to him in fact than Greeks or Romans; but in the parable the Samaritan acts the part of a neighbor and brother to an unfortunate Jew, wounded and ready to die, after one and another of the reputedly best of the sufferer's own people had passed him by.§ After that utterance the word neighbor in the commandment could never have the narrow meaning it had before. The duty of brotherliness thenceforth extended over

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\* Acts 17:26.      † Matt. 7:12.

‡ John 4:9.      § Luke 10:30-37.

all frontiers ; difference of race, of speech, of color, ceased to afford release from its requirement ; distinctly, men had no more the right on such grounds to do each other wrong. The enmities of nation against nation had no longer an ethical standing. War became wholesale murder, and pillage licensed robbery. The later socialistic doctrine on the subject had found a voice.

The Golden Rule vitalizes brotherliness, gives it substance and soul. Men may be brothers by blood-relationship, and not be kind to each other ; but they who live by the Golden Rule will be brothers indeed, with or without the kinship of blood. It promptly checks the manifestation of an overweening selfishness, keeps ever alive thoughtfulness of others, makes heroes and saviors by subordinating the individual to the collective interest. It is the one sure basis of social harmony and happiness. Its observance, at least in appearance, is the essence even of courteous manners, the first necessity of common politeness. Hence in the casual meeting of friends or acquaintances, in social assemblies, fashionable or unfashionable, there is studied effort to observe the form of doing as we would be done by, to show due deference to those with whom we mingle, to make a feint, if nothing more, of preferring others before ourselves, at any rate where it is but just to do so. At the same time we are well aware that this — in bulk at least — is form ; good form, necessary form, but form only. Your gracious host, who does so abundantly for your happiness, all he could wish to have done for

himself, may then and there be planning some game of high finance to ruin you and others of the company next day. The Golden Rule, applied to externals, gives a social elegance that could poorly be dispensed with; but certainly no such superficial observance would satisfy the giver of the rule. With him it went to the innermost and uttermost, regulating even the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Now, it is certain that such a rule of life was, at the time of its announcement in Galilee,\* incapable of being put in practice short of a social revolution. Its observance by a band of wandering preachers might create no special disturbance, but its general adoption as a guiding principle of life would have had to be accompanied by a great overturning. And we must admit, its full adoption now, after all the boasted progress of the centuries, would involve a no less tremendous change. For, while in a superficial sense—that is, in certain of the amenities of life, in our charities, our philanthropies, in law and custom; briefly, in our manners—we make a far greater outward show of fraternity than did the world of nineteen hundred years ago, there has on the other hand, in consequence of the enormous growth of private capital and the mad rush of every new generation for the possession of it, been engendered an underlying and overmastering selfishness, a fierce and

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\* It had been uttered in almost identical form centuries before by Confucius in China and by Plato in Athens, and, about 40 B.C., by Hillel in Jerusalem, and derives from independent origin in these various quarters an immeasurable merit of universality.

all-devouring greed, which seem to put the Golden Rule farther than ever from acceptance.

#### CONFLICT OF PRACTICE WITH PRECEPT

One wonders how far it is possible "to be good" under a system which makes the getting of what the New Testament contemptuously calls "filthy lucre" the chief end of life; which exaggerates and exalts the motive for getting it till it becomes so imperious that means and measures are scrutinized only to see that they will not too certainly land the eager seeker behind prison-doors. Great chances of even that fate will be taken if the prize is large. All the while, men thus possessed by the lust of gold will put on an air of uprightness, perhaps of piety. They respect the church and the scriptures. At any rate they will seldom openly and in plain terms be heard to denounce the Golden Rule; they will simply ignore it, as a mystic precept impossible of application in the business world. Modern methods exclude all such fine scrupulosities. Not all callings are equally antagonistic to it; perhaps there are some few where it may measurably be brought into practice. Agriculture, from its simplicity and its direct dealing with Nature, offers some chance. But the farmer whose products are marketed with no effort at deception, whose butter, whose fruits, are through and through what they look to be on the surface of the package, whose maple-sugar is not a flavored admixture of muscovado, is a rather rare specimen of the *Homo rusticus agricolaris*, likely to be ruined by his less con-



scientious neighbors. Some of the trades and professions admit of the practice of altruism, not indeed in the measure Jesus required, but to a notable degree. Physicians and surgeons, for example, are in the way of rendering an astonishing amount of gratuitous service, doing whole-heartedly for others in straits as they would have others do for them. But of the business world in general nothing of the kind is to be said, as every one knows. The operators themselves are perfectly conscious of this, as the attitude they take when brought into a discussion of the subject more or less distinctly shows. They do not care to hear much said about the Golden Rule. With such of them as retain from childhood some lingering feeling that it is somehow binding, the faithful presentation of it produces an unpleasant contradiction in the consciousness. Others, more philosophical, driven by the palpable conflict between their daily practice and the gospel teachings to which they are supposed to assent, think the matter out to some sort of a logical conclusion. In the process overmastering economic considerations are usually decisive. For obvious reasons — also economic — the outcome of such reflections is ordinarily given no publicity, but now and then a startling declaration will be made. The minister of a prominent orthodox Congregational church in a large eastern city, becoming a socialist, and basing his socialism on the ethics of Jesus, was met by one of his trustees, a very successful and clear-headed business man personally known to the present writer, with the frank avowal : "I do not believe in the ethics

of Jesus; I stand on the ethics of Aristotle."\* Thus what is tacitly indicated by the general practice will occasionally come to a verbal expression on the lips of Christian men, leaders in society and in the church, so desperately obvious is the contradiction between the moral teaching of the gospel and the working of the existing social order, so impossible is it to conduct business under this order in accordance with that teaching. Efforts are constantly made to minimize all this, but it will not be minimized. The more the teaching of Jesus is looked into, the more irreconcilable it is seen to be with the social system under which we live. Not even "the deceitfulness of riches" which Jesus so roundly charged with choking the word of truth, and which is a thousand-fold more of a power now than it was then, can make this appear otherwise. We simply have left us a choice between the two things. It is still out of the question to serve God and Mammon.

#### THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN COLLECTIVITY

Jesus preached brotherliness — "Ye are all brethren" — and laid upon his followers such obligation of mutual service that the community which gathered about his name became immediately distinguished for the fidelity of its members to one another. Their common form of address was "Brother," and the word

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\* A similar admission has even been heard from ministers, constrained by the irreconcilability of Jesus' precepts with the ways of the modern Christian world.

so used carried then its full significance. The body of disciples were known as "the brethren." \* The closest relations existed among the twelve who were the immediate attendants upon the Master, and who with him formed the nucleus of the church, the model on which it was constituted. They all lived out of a common treasury, which, because it held so little, was not dignified by that name, but was rather contemptuously called "the bag," and became ultimately a reproach to the one who carried it. † If any one of the little community had a house, all equally occupied it. One modest shelter at Capernaum may have belonged to Jesus, but it was used so much in common as to give the impression of a collective ownership. ‡ One of the references to it indicates that it was situated close by the shore of the lake which he loved.

The communism practiced by the Master and his chosen twelve was not a prearranged system, not a formulated doctrine; it was simply the natural result of their close fellowship, taken up as matter of course by a band of brothers so absorbed in the general aim as to have lost all concern for personal and private ends. One or more of them had family relations § which must have exacted some attention; still, interest in and responsibility for the great social and religious movement subordinated domestic obligations

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\* John 21:23; Acts *passim*. † John 12:6; 13:29.

‡ Matt. 9:10,28; 13:1,36; 17:25; Mark 2:1; 3:19; 7:17; 9:33; 10:10; John 1:39. But see Luke 9:58.

§ Matt. 8:14.

to a degree startling to our modern ideas, creating a semblance of monasticism.\* However, the most active and assiduous of the twelve had a household apart which he did not wholly abandon, and which Jesus visited. †

In the primitive church under the direct ministry of Jesus, the holding of some little private property seems not to have been abrogated; but persons of large means, wishing to come into the fellowship, were required to rid themselves of their possessions. The general direction was: "Sell what ye have, and give alms," on the ground that earthly goods are fleeting, and that he who sets his heart on them will have a weakened regard for higher and more enduring things. ‡ How rigorously this rule was applied to the few rich persons who showed a disposition to join the community is brought out in the account of one such incident. An exceedingly eligible candidate presented himself in the person of a young man so pure in life and so winsome in his manners that Jesus, it is said, "looking on him, loved him." When the young man had indicated his desire, and asked what he should do, the answer was: "Go, sell whatever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." As this was more than the candidate, who withal was very rich, felt prepared to do, he was not received into the church. §

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\* Matt. 19:29; Luke 14:26; 18:29; John 17:14, 16.

† Mark 1:29; Luke 4:38.     ‡ Luke 12:33, 34.

§ Mark 10:17-22. Needless to say, the church has made some changes in its rules since that day.

The church under the immediate direction of Jesus exhibited only that incipient stage of communism growing inevitably out of his pronounced humanism and his avowed distrust of things material. It was a communism of persons rather than of possessions, the possessions being disposed of on the threshold of the church before entering. The church had not yet come to the consciousness of needing money, nor to the consciousness of ability to make better use of it for the poor, or otherwise, than the candidates for membership were likely to make; it was content to require of them that they distribute their possessions in alms, whereupon they might come into the fellowship with pure hearts, and with hands clean of filthy lucre. Later the idea of Jesus received some development, and candidates for admission, after converting their estates into money, turned the proceeds into the treasury of the church to be used for the needs and at the discretion of the community of believers.\*

#### INWARD AND OUTWARD CONDITIONS

The communism of the early church was a natural outcome of the Master's teaching, though nowhere definitely formulated by him. To him economic matters were too slight a concernment and of too transitory a nature to call for much attention. He felt and avowed an indifference to them, and sought by a belittling of outward and visible things to turn the hearts of his hearers toward the spiritual and invis-

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\* Acts 4:32-35.

ible. His voice is still pleading: the inward is of more consequence than the outward, the life more than food; think, then, how life may be greatened and bettered, and trust the foodful earth to grow enough for the nourishment of all who live upon it. Do not trouble about what you will have to eat, what clothes you will have to wear; think rather how to live uprightly. Look out for the inner man; Nature may be trusted to provide for outward needs.\* He did not fail to see that social conditions were out of joint and working wretchedly; in fact, the human world in its organization, its government, its superposition of classes, its exploiting of the weak by the strong, was so obnoxious to him that, seeing no way of renovation in the natural course of things, he held that the divine justice must supervene and, by a manifestation of power such as never was seen since first the world stood, set aside the whole accursed system of things;† and this most momentous overturning was coming so soon — within the lifetime of those to whom he spoke ‡ — that there was no use in undertaking to reconstruct the old social mechanism, a task, moreover, which must have looked too formidable for human accomplishment within any assignable time.

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\* Matt. 6:19-34.

† Matt. 24:27; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:32.

‡ Matt. 16:28; Luke 21:32.

THE OLD ORDER NOT PASSING MUST BE ASSAILED  
AND DESTROYED

With his anticipation of the near approach of "the last day," in which the existing social order should receive its *coup de grace* at the hand of an irresistible Power, it was but natural that Jesus, leaving conditions which seemed past remedy to go their way to their appalling consummation, should direct his efforts to the rescue of individual souls, to a work of inward purification whereby an elect few, at any rate, might be saved from the impending wreck of the old world.\*

But the end of what had been did not come. The sun was not darkened; the moon has not turned to blood, much occasion as she had to crimson at what she looked down upon through the centuries.† No supernatural hand having intervened, as was expected, to do away with the old and bring in a new order, that task, prodigious as it is, falls to human agencies, and falls peremptorily by all the force of Jesus' word. His kingdom cannot come without a transformation of outward conditions. It is mockery to ask for it while consenting to a system which blocks its advance, a system which regularly corrupts and defiles, which, not content with leading the world into temptation, infallibly weakens where

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\* Matt. 24:29-31.

† Expressions, however, which may well be taken as referring only to eclipses, the reddish earth-shine on the face of the moon during totality suggesting the phraseology "turned into blood."



it does not destroy the power to resist temptation. Many and important steps toward this transformation have already been taken,\* every one of them full in the spirit of the gospel teaching. The world, urged on by that spirit while so largely disregarding it, is tending unmistakably to an order of things accordant therewith, and which when it comes will be on all sides conducive to the virtues and not to the vices.

And this coming, what is it in reality but that which is foreshadowed in the gospels where Jesus, seeing the impossibility, within the brief period allotted him, of shaping social conditions to make them favorable to the establishment of his kingdom of righteousness and peace, declared that in due time the Son of Man would return, coming "in power and great glory," to clear the way for his kingdom and bring it fully in? Without resorting to any fine-spun theory of prophecy and its fulfilment, it may not be out of the way here to say that of all things that have ever been dreamed of or hoped for, socialism, rightly understood, best answers to the Parousia or second coming of Jesus as set forth in certain passages of gospels and epistles. Not that this movement was definitely in the mind of speaker or writer, but that it suits to what they had in mind, be that what it may, in a manner worthy of attention. Even capitalism, as monstrously developed in our day, cannot escape seeming to be limned under the figure of the "man of sin," far better than Rome was, in the passage:—

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\* See Chapter II.

"Let no man deceive you by any means ; for that day will not come unless there be a falling away first and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. . . . The mystery of lawlessness is already working, . . . and in time will the lawless one be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will consume with the breath of his mouth, and destroy with the manifestation of his coming." \* And how shall the preachers under capitalism who minister only to the rich, avoid seeing themselves referred to in this ? —

"And many will follow their pernicious ways ; by reason of which the way of truth will be evil spoken of. And through covetousness will they with feigned words make merchandise of you ; whose judgment now for a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." †

Of the "second coming" we are told that it was not to be under cover, hidden away in a corner ; no one village or city was to be distinguished as the place of the great appearing. It was to be a world-wide manifestation, everywhere seen and everywhere significant. The Master's caution is, not to be deceived by any local pretender, for many such will rise and will lead away many ; people will acclaim a Christ here and a Christ there. "If therefore they say to you, 'Lo ! he is in the wilderness,' go not forth ;

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\* II Thess. 2:3-8.

† II Peter 2:2, 3.

or, 'Lo! he is in private chambers,' believe them not. For as the lightning cometh from the east and shineth to the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man." \* This is a brilliantly poetic characterization of the rise of the modern socialist movement, which indeed has flashed as the lightning round the whole world.

But the fitness of this representation of socialism lies not so much in the manner of its coming as in what it brings with it, what it proposes to do, which is nothing less than to shape the conditions of human life in accordance with gospel precepts; to accomplish that for which the life of Jesus was all too short and for which he felt that he must needs come again, namely, to sweep away the old social order, built on principles hostile to the Golden Rule, generating all manner of cupidity and covetousness, outrage and abomination, and set up in its place a new order founded in justice and making for practical brotherhood, the "new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." † These things which have come largely to be reckoned mere visions and dreams, "too good to be true," or else pertaining to some other state of existence, are to be realized in a veritable Parousia here in this world by creatures of flesh and blood like ourselves. But it is not to come out of any such simple plan as that of the English Christian socialists of the last century, who seemed to think all they had to do was to start a few co-operative

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\* Matt. 24 : 26, 27.      † II Peter 3 : 13; Rev. 21 : 1, 10, 24-26.

associations; it is interesting however to note that they looked for the millennium to follow close on the heels of their little scheme. "I was convinced that we had nothing to do but just to announce it, and found an association or two," said Thomas Hughes when enthusiasm had subsided, "in order to convert all England and usher in the millennium at once, so plain did the whole thing look to me." And the majority of his associates seemed to have the same confidence. Even their poorly inadequate socialism had to their Christian consciousness the suggestion of a second coming of Christ. Their error was in thinking that large results can flow from little causes. The great social reconstruction is to be effected only by measures commensurate with the magnitude of the undertaking.

We get no impression from the assurances of a second coming that the reappearing Christ is to lack anything of that pristine vigor which hurled defiance in the teeth of the rich and titled, overturned the tables of the money-changers in the temple, denounced the speculators, and with "a scourge of cords" drove sheep and oxen and owners out.\* On the contrary he takes on a new severity, shows the strong arm, for he comes to deal with a situation, with hard economic facts which evoke none of the pitying tenderness which characterized his intercourse with the poor and suffering and downtrodden in Galilee. This time his mission is different; he is going to break things; or,

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\* Matt. 23:4-36; Mark 12:38-40; Luke 11:37-44; John 2:14-15.

as the scripture forcefully puts it, "to destroy the destroyers of the earth." \* But this severity is only to clear away the obstacles to the reign of equity and of brotherliness. He, in the new rôle, is a terror only to the workers of iniquity, the evil-minded whose deeds are "after the working of Satan with all power and signs and wonders of falsehood, and in all deceit of unrighteousness for those who are perishing." † They who are seeking the welfare of the world rejoice in the new day, and enter upon its privileges with bounding hearts. "From the east and the west and the north and the south will men come, and take their places at table in the kingdom of God." "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." ‡

#### SOCIALISM THE REAL SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

In all soberness it is not too much to say that since the life of Jesus went out upon the cross no other such sign of his reappearance has been seen as is offered by the socialist movement. How far that movement may reasonably be so interpreted, they who know it to the bottom and are freest from religious or anti-religious prejudices are best able to judge. Two pre-suppositions should count in passing upon the matter. (1) The realization of the kingdom of heaven awaits a radical social reconstruction. Of this

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\* Matt. 24: 29-31; Rev. 11: 15-18; 20: 2-10.

† II Thess. 2: 9, 10. See also Rev. 6: 15-17.

‡ Matt. 13: 43; Luke 13: 29.

what could be more nearly demonstrative than the fact that, after eighteen and a half centuries of Christian effort, nothing approaching such a realization is to be seen? The tremendous force of this consideration comes out when we take into account the Master's own hope that the great consummation might be reached within about a hundred years from the date of his birth.\* So much greater than even his estimate was the social obstacle to the accomplishment of his aim! And now, but for the socialist hope, another two thousand years might pass without a symptom of that kingdom's coming. (2) The doctrine of the Parousia, or second coming, seems to have been prompted by the felt need of extirpating certain economic and social obstructions standing in the way of the realization of the kingdom, and which are not to be got rid of by any and all efforts at inward purification. The inward draws from the outward, and if the outward is a slough of pollution, no process of inward cleansing, however thorough and persistent, will keep the heart clear of the swarming microbes of perdition. That, to insure health, external conditions must be looked after as well as internal ones, is better known now than it was in ancient days; so too the fact that one may be the victim of social circumstances no matter how pure one's acts and intentions; but sad experience forced these points home in some measure even then. The slow and resistless movement of the social mechan-

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\* Matt. 24:34; Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27.

ism, directed by powerful enemies, kept drawing the Master within its iron grip, and full soon crushed out his life, as before and since similar machines have crushed no one can say how many more. He saw its relentless hand reaching out after him, and saw then the need of public as well as personal purity, of social as well as individual regeneration; saw that outward conditions work their fatalities no less surely than inward conditions, and have equal need of shaping and reshaping. This perception bore upon his thought of what remained to be done in the world ere his kingdom could come.

Whatever may be thought of the proposition that socialism is the second coming of Christ, there can be no question that its aim, put in Christian terms, is to bring in the kingdom of heaven. For we must bear in mind that socialism is the one force in the world which is unequivocally working for social justice, for human brotherhood, for the abolition of class distinctions by making labor universal and securing to every laborer the full product of his toil; the only force that is frankly working for the deliverance of all men and women from injustice, oppression, and outrage, and to give that uplift to the lowly which is the moving spirit of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Without avowing anything of the kind, because it wishes to stand aloof from religious questions and escape being foredoomed to sterility by having the charge fixed upon it of being another religious movement, socialism is in its essence a religion, albeit a religion without theology and without a church; and its aim



is, if not the building of the kingdom of heaven which Jesus had in mind, at least a clearing of the ground so as to make the building possible.

Socialism will make a practical application of the ethics of Jesus. It will expunge involuntary poverty, that misery old as civilization and worsening as civilization advances, — progress and poverty going hand in hand and keeping step together, — misery which so appealed to the heart of Jesus, and against which the church, under the existing social order, has made its long contention, mitigating what it is impotent to abolish, in hopeless inefficiency “waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God,” the appearance of him in the clouds of heaven from whose face the old order of things is to flee away ; and strangely failing to recognize him when he comes. It will wipe out the shame of what we see in a world overflowing with bounty — storehouses bursting with plenty of all the heart can desire, and yet millions in rags and on the verge of starvation where not actually starving, and all because some thousands have possessed themselves of the bulk of what is good, because the earth is the landlords’, and to them and to the other lords is the fulness thereof. It will make human brotherhood more than an empty phrase for politicians and preachers to conjure with, throwing dust in the eyes of a deluded people ; for it will create in collective ownership a commonwealth which will be all that the word implies, binding its members together in mutual helpfulness, and will set aside forever a system which stands morally condemned as tending to make

Ishmaels of us all, our hand against every man, and every man's hand against us.

To get directly at the social spirit of Jesus, it needs to go to his word on social matters. This we have, apropos of an invitation to a social gathering which he received from some one of the well-to-do with whom he felt free to speak. The passage is brief, but markedly characteristic, and runs as follows:

"And he said also to the one who invited him: 'When thou makest a dinner or a supper, do not invite thy friends, nor thy brothers, nor thy kinsmen, nor rich neighbors; lest they too invite thee in return, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed, because they cannot recompense thee; but thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the righteous.' " \* We mark the effect of the conditions under which this direction was given, which from that day to this have generally compelled the religious teacher to postpone to a future life the reward of any unselfish action; but the notable thing about the advice is that it never has been followed—save in exceptional instances and in patronizing, perfunctory ways—and never can be followed under these conditions, since they make social distinctions unescapable and of superlative importance. The Master's social doctrine is in violent antagonism with the system of things then existing and now existing, and it is perfectly

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\* Luke 14:12-14.

apparent what the final upshot of such ideas must be. That they lead straight on to socialism will hardly be denied except by past-masters of obscurantism bent on reading into words what is not there, and on reading out what they were meant to convey.

A RESTATEMENT OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE NEEDED

Jesus has been called the Prince of Peace. So, we find it written, he was rated by the angels who sang his natal song. And the great distinction he himself bore out by the words and deeds of his ministry. It is not possible for people who accept his precepts and faithfully apply them to fall out with one another. Hardly can it be that one imbued with his spirit and hearkening to his word will fall out with anybody. The simple obligation to be reconciled with an offended brother as an indispensable prerequisite of any act of worship,\* insured in the primitive church a good understanding among the members. The voice that is said to have calmed the sea and hushed the rage of demons was as a bugle sounding over the hills of Galilee the Truce of God to the whole human world. So it seemed; and so in good measure it was, with the church at least, so long as the church was a humble community having all things in common, and little concerned with other than spiritual matters. But to be established in the world, peace must have behind it more than a sentiment. Good-will will not be generally maintained on the mere conviction that

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\* Matt. 5:23-24.

any breach of good-will is unrighteous. If society is economically so constituted that the personal interests of its members are in unavoidable conflict, disagreements more or less bitter are going to develop, no matter how strong the feeling may be that it is not good Christian form to be "on the war-path" with one's neighbors. So, too, nations whose interests collide, whose enterprises are forestalled by other nations, whose profitable "spheres of influence" among the barbarians are invaded, will fight, if need be, for their "rights," much as they love the gospel of peace, and much as they reverence the Prince of Peace.

To perfect the great work and really bring peace among men it needs that Christ come again, and with a more inclusive gospel, reaching to and moulding outward conditions as well as the inward spirit. Men must be set in right economic relations with one another if they are to be effectually saved from endless, body-and-soul destroying conflict. And as with individuals, so with nations. We shall never have done with war and preparation for war so long as the existing social order holds sway, perpetuating its rank inequalities which seldom rest on any slightest ground of moral desert, and are commonly in open defiance of human service rendered or not rendered, — a system which conspicuously nourishes a towering selfishness, an insatiable greed, an anti-social passion to hurt and destroy, to fleece and devour. Vain is it to cry, Peace, peace! and still stand by the old economic methods which have bred contention since history began. It is such a palpable waste of sentiment as

to seem little short of mockery. To be sure, war breaks out less frequently than it did; but that is not from any decline of the fighting spirit, it is because war has become so terribly destructive that capitalists are unable, on the whole, to get out of it a net profit, and because for them the spoils of peace are found to exceed the spoils of war. So they bring into "the battle of life," into production and exchange, the prowess that once was more exclusively military, the tricks of deception, of ambush; modified enginery of siege and pillage; deploy their armies of toilers in a thousand posts of danger, making little account of casualties, which are by no means few; and heap up millions with a celerity astonishing even to those they exploit. Their conflicts are with one another — where they have not "combined"; with their employés; with their consciences (when encumbered with such appurtenances); and all the genius displayed by Charles of Sweden, by Frederick the Great, by Napoleon, by Nelson, comes out in the masters of finance and the captains of industry. They who get an inside glimpse of the operations, who observe the mercilessness of the movements in the game, who witness a strike, know how little it all differs in essence from a state of war.

These methods, this system, so flagrantly antagonistic to the spirit and the word of Jesus, socialism would extirpate, root and branch. So doing, it would supplement Christianity, as developed since apostolic times; would become, as Saint-Simon contended, "The New Christianity," harking back to and reviving the inspiration of the Galilean Founder. Churchmen of

note have seen the need, the supreme need of this return to the Master, of this intake of his spirit, and have pleaded with the church not to be forever false to his leading ; to hear the call so long unheard ; to become herself the first to welcome his reappearing ; to go forth to meet him coming up from the waste places of the earth, his locks wet with the dews of a night that has seemed to have no end. What words of prophetic appeal, for example, are these of Lamennais ! —

“After eighteen centuries of Christianity we live yet under the pagan system. In the name of the Sovereign Author of things, of the Celestial Father who embraces all his children in one same love, we have proclaimed equality, liberty, human fraternity ; and inequality is everywhere, servitude everywhere. Everywhere, brother has riveted to the feet of brother the chain of slavery ; everywhere the people groan under a sacrilegious oppression ; everywhere, in place of the grand and sweet face of Christ, we see lift itself the specter of Cain.

“Brothers, this profound disorder, this impious rebellion against God and His law, this insolent, this criminal violation of the vital principles of humanity, ought to come to an end. You cannot permit it longer to endure without rendering yourselves direct accomplices. Interest, duty, all high considerations, urge you to take hold of the holy work of social regeneration.”\*

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\* *Paroles d'un Croyant.*

## CHAPTER XII

### SOCIALISM AND THE CHURCH

It so happened that the modern socialist movement was led by men who were materialists in their philosophy and atheistic touching religion. It happened so; but, for aught one can now see, it might have happened otherwise, for there is nothing in the principles of socialism that requires an adherent to be an atheist or a materialist. But these men wove into their elaborations of socialism a good deal of their philosophy, grounded their expectation of a social overturning on a materialistic determinism in history, a kind of automatic fatality, suggesting Calvinism cut loose from God,—made such a forceful dogma of this that the whole movement took the impress of it, the first following being made up almost exclusively of free-thinkers, atheists, people from conviction alienated from the church. Other things came in to strengthen the trend leftwards. The church in its conservatism shrank back from the new ideas, and on the other hand, extremists of the daring type took them up and carried them forward into anarchy, giving the whole scheme through the early years of the propaganda a hue to set the bulls of Bashan crazy. The anti-Christian stamp became indelible, and not even expulsion of the anarchists effaced it. One still encounters it in many circles of socialists, and oppo-



nents are apt to make much of the fact, forgetting what reasons there are for it.

The people, the toiling masses, in whose breasts surged the consciousness of wrongs endured through the centuries, had received slight tokens of sympathy from the church. While chapels and cathedrals stood open to all comers with a look of hospitality, while within their walls noble and peasant were on a footing of something like equality, the organization time out of mind has been autocratic, fashioned from the first on the model of imperial Rome. Independent spirits among the toilers with hand or with brain, lovers of light and of liberty, have seen this, have felt it, and have steadily withdrawn from the connection. They could not forget how six successive popes fought tooth and nail to suppress Arnold of Brescia and his restoration of the Roman Republic; how the hierarchy, which never goes down with the fall of no matter how many of its heads, did not rest till it had Arnold in its hands, hanged him, burned him, cast his ashes in the Tiber; putting out so the light of liberty in Italy, save for some gleams from Rienzi and Savonarola, for seven centuries.\* Nor could they

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\* In our day in America we occasionally hear from Catholic sources a good word spoken for civil and religious liberty; but they deceive themselves who infer from this that the church has reversed its attitude. The Pope having recently condemned Le Sillon, a French Catholic society working for social justice in very moderate measure, *The Catholic Register* (Toronto) comments approvingly, giving the substance of the papal ban: "The Sillon exalts human dignity, liberty, and justice beyond measure; its theories tend to the political, economical, and intellectual emancipation of the people, and to the abandonment of social inequality, to the

forget that Luther, peasant's son though he was, turned against the peasants in their war, they the weak and he the mighty, and made Protestantism the rival of the older church as champion of despotic power. The mortal shame of this was the fact that the peasants had ample justification for their uprising, and moreover were followers of Luther, looking to him as their leader and spiritual father. They had formulated their demands with remarkable calmness, basing them, like good Christians, upon the gospel, making a document of eleven articles, the simple enumeration of which by their titles affords instructive reading now. Stipulating over and over that they wanted nothing which could not be shown to be in accordance with the gospel, they asked for the following reforms, religious and civil: (1) The right of congregations to choose and to dismiss (for cause) their own pastors. (2) Some slight reduction of tithes paid for church maintenance. (3) Abolition of serfdom, "since Christ has redeemed us all." (4) Game, fish and fowl to be free, as God created them. (5) Some readjustment of forestry rights, which the rich had monopolized. (6, 7) No more compulsory service of the lords; except as by contract, wages to be paid for all work. (8) Fair rents.

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leveling of the classes and the suppression of authority, which goes to show that it wishes to overturn the old and natural foundations of society, and set up instead the autonomy of the individual, the authority of all, and the universal brotherhood. The Holy Father rejects this dream, so full of errors and dangerous illusions," etc. "The Holy Father shows that human brotherhood, while a precious cry, is a weak bond indeed," etc.

(9) Abolition of arbitrary punishments. (10) The commons to be restored to the people. (11) The right of the lord to take the peasant's best chattel to be abolished. For these moderate demands the poor peasants, after vainly pleading for so much justice, took up arms—such arms as they had; whereupon Luther, who had been fair enough to declare for the reasonableness of most of their requests, and even to urge—when it was too late—the granting of some of them, pronounced roundly against the uprising, in a writing entitled, “The Murdering, Robbing Rats of Peasants,” and encouraged the nobles to suppress the rebellion with fire and sword, to “stab, kill, and strangle” the wretches. Practically defenseless against the assaults of a well-armed soldiery, fully fifty thousand peasants were mercilessly butchered. It is not in human nature that German working-men should forget that abandonment of their predecessors by the founder of German Protestantism.

Hardly ever or anywhere has the church been openly and avowedly with the people against their oppressors; on the contrary it has decidedly and persistently upheld the strong arm, the autocratic, irresponsible authority. Thus in the older countries, before ever socialism was thought of, and for good and sufficient reason, the church lost its hold upon the great body of intelligent working-men who later became socialists. Becoming socialists has had little to do with alienating people from the church; they were alienated beforehand; their becoming socialists is more a consequence than a cause of this alienation.

On the other hand, notwithstanding the reputation the socialist body has had of being made up of the unreligious, as matter of fact the principles of socialism are so profoundly humanitarian as to have proved exceedingly attractive to a considerable number of the most deeply religious souls of this and of the preceding century. To be sure some of these have not risen above their prejudices, have yielded to them in fact, and sought by forming a distinct and avowedly *Christian* socialist order at once to strengthen the church and keep the faithful from the harm that might come from association with unbelievers. But this has been mostly in Germany, where the great strength of the Social Democracy has occasioned the church, both Catholic and Protestant, no little disquietude. Needless to say, a socialism which is espoused primarily to serve another end, to take the wind out of the sails of the party for the benefit of the church, will be a rather colorless type not much to be counted on. Elsewhere a more whole-hearted devotion to the new social ideas has been shown by churchmen whose clear vision discerns the underlying reality uniting some things which are superficially opposed. Early prophet and prince of these stood Lamennais in France, and to him with pride and reverence turn the eyes of hundreds of English and American clergymen, active and retired, who now stand committed heart and soul to the great cause, and who are giving a positively religious cast to the literature of socialism.

## THE MODERN CHURCH AND THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

But this does not change the fact that the church as a whole, of every name, stands aloof from the socialist movement, holding it Utopian, revolutionary, a scheme of spoliation and ruin,—in other words, accepting things as they are, with no other melioration, present or prospective, than may be effected by Christian charity, the condescension of the pious rich, and, on the part of the poor, a more willing obedience to their masters. Reasons enough can be given in explanation of this attitude. The church, as it exists in these days, is an expensive institution, the most expensive in the world, perhaps, for what it seems to accomplish. What *seems* is of course not all; but it is all that is measurable. To begin with, the cost of housing this institution is enormous; then the cost of maintenance is large and met ordinarily only by a struggle of whose severity they, and only they, know who have had a hand in it. As compared with other public institutions, schools, libraries, hospitals, and measured by the work done and the number of persons directly benefited, it mounts in expensiveness above them all. Plenty of churches with an average attendance of fifty or less have an annual budget to carry of \$10,000 or more; which means (if the congregation pays the bills) an average tax per Sunday on each man, woman, and child of at least four dollars. Even where the outlay is considerably less, it is still high enough to exclude all but the well-to-do. And, under existing conditions, there is

no way of getting around this. The device of "free seats" deceives nobody; current expenses are not avoided in that way; the bills have still to be paid. Hence, and inevitably, the church becomes virtually a capitalistic institution. Capitalists, members or non-members, attendants or non-attendants, in the main support it, and for reasons of their own. They consider it a conservative influence in the community, a buttress of things established, a bulwark against all sorts of radicalism endangering property rights and threatening social revolution.

Under these circumstances the greatest effort will be made by every church, in sharp competition with every other in the vicinity, to secure the patronage of any man of wealth who comes within reach, and the greatest care will be taken by minister and people not to alienate such a valuable friend once his name is on the books. The more of his sort who are brought in, the easier the machinery runs; the church that has a goodly number of them can pick its preacher out of the most talented, and is considered a bonanza for the minister who gets it. It is reputed far and wide to be in a "state of grace," it makes liberal contributions for denominational enterprises, for the conversion of the Jews and the heathen, for the standard local charities; it is a model church, the envy and the despair of all the weaker sort. The membership, large or small, is in seething activity, closely knit together, forming a social union quite happy in itself, which implies that the members are substantially of one class. And this of necessity.

As things are in our world they could not work together otherwise. They go out to help the poor, but the poor are not with them nor of them. If the poor want a church they go by themselves. But they are not calling for it very loudly; do not much flock to it when it is built for them.

One of the evidences adduced of the genuineness of the claims of Jesus was that "the poor have the gospel preached to them." The example he set in this matter was followed through the first Christian centuries. Christians then could be brothers together, as they were of one class, all out of the substratum of society — God's poor — the class that first had the gospel preached to them. But since then the church has drifted far and away from that fashion. These fifteen hundred years it has been in alliance with the high and mighty. The needle's eye has been magnified into an archway through which camels pass with entire ease, bearing the rich into the heavenly kingdom. Meantime the poor, like dogs in ancient Jewry, have had to content themselves in spiritual as in temporal things, with the crumbs that fall from their masters' tables.

So, in Protestant connections, there is a pretty distinct cleavage of the world along church lines to correspond with the cleavage on social lines. The rich and people of good incomes, such of them as are religiously inclined, are in the churches, or if not in them then behind them; the poor generally have no part nor lot in the matter, and have reso-



lutely determined not to have any part in it, having in a manner adjusted themselves to the situation.

It is impossible, under the existing state of things but that the church must be in all this substantially what it is. In a world where money makes everything else go, it of course makes the church go. So here as elsewhere the first and foremost thing is the financial situation. If that is dark, everything is dark, and there is no prospect. If that is bright, all is bright, and heaven sits smiling on the billowy sea (or pond) of upturned faces. But to depend on money is to depend on persons who have money; and so it is inevitable that the few rich in a congregation, even though not in the least domineering, will dominate. Not only will it fall to them to shape the policy of the body at their pleasure, it is quite in their power, and that, too, without the slightest *show* of interference, to prompt or to stay the word of the preacher. At all events the minister who is not disposed to bow to the wishes of these men and women in what he has to say, needs to be prepared to take up his grip and depart. If he is a convinced socialist, for example, he knows better than to say so without first making sure that these persons are tolerant of socialism. If he knows they are not, and still proposes to stick to his post, his tongue is effectually tied; for, not even to deliver the burden of his soul can he say that which will cost the church the main sources of its support. How many occupants of pulpits up and down the land would like to be

prophets and declare the whole counsel of God, and yet cannot!

We are in face of this strange and double paradox: on the one hand the church, disregarding the spirit and the precepts of its Founder as they bear on the social question, taking with practical unanimity, in the great division over that question now being called, the side of the rich against the poor; and, on the other hand, socialism, worked out as a system and adhered to mainly by men and women who do not even profess to be Christians, yet a system so eminently in accord with the moral teaching of the gospel that we seem to hear in it the voice of Jesus saying again, "Come unto me all ye who are weary and heavy-laden";—the paradox of scriptures with, to say the least, a strong socialistic leaning, held as the basis of a capitalistic church; and a secular socialism proclaiming human brotherhood, pleading the cause of the lowly and oppressed, and seeking to realize a kingdom of heaven on earth by the actual rescue of millions fallen among robbers, stript of title to so much as six feet of earth to lay their bodies in, and left wounded and half dead on the downhill Jericho road.

#### THE BREACH INEVITABLE AND APPARENTLY PERPETUAL

The paradox, bald as it is, stands, and is going to stand. Strong as the case may be made to appear for socialism that its contentions are sound, humanitarian, just and righteous altogether, that they are implicit in the gospel, that they make for the new

heavens and the new earth therein set forth, re-enforcing the hope with a definite plan for its realization,—it nevertheless seems not within the limits of possibility that the church will become a furthering agency of the socialist movement in time to be of much service. By the very nature of its organization it is held from espousing any cause so long as that cause is unpopular,—so long, that is, as the cause is in need of its support. This fatal backwardness was painfully in evidence during the anti-slavery conflict. The sentiment of the country had to be turned overwhelmingly against slavery ere the church as a body could pronounce for abolition. The few preachers who ventured to speak when the cause really needed advocacy, had a rough time of it. So it has ever been, and so, apparently, it ever must be. As regards the present issue, only in exceptional cases can the pulpit be expected to champion the new ideas. However the preacher may feel, the institution is almost everywhere in the hands of capitalists who will not tolerate such a proceeding. Attempted, it would, in nine cases out of ten, either unseat the preacher or disrupt the congregation. So the preacher, in all sincerity, is led to hesitate, to question the wisdom of uttering his honest thought, of applying very pointedly the ethics of Jesus, of pushing home the doctrine of universal brotherhood, of insisting on the practice of the Golden Rule in all affairs, though to make it possible the present heavens should have to fall. Having thought it all over, unless he is a very extraordinary man, he will fall back on the

maxim that "discretion is the better part of valor," and keep the peace of Zion by holding his own peace.

Theoretically we may be disposed to ask, What would Jesus do in such circumstances? But that is hardly a practical question, since we cannot for a moment suppose our preachers to have either his consecration or his courage. Moreover there rises the obligation of the minister to the body he serves, whose mouthpiece he in a manner is—made by virtue of his office as priest rather than prophet. In accepting the function, he may be said to have bound himself to fulfil it, or retire from his post; and therefore the silence of the pulpit where to some of us it is so sad, so culpable even, is not to be wholly laid on the preacher. The fault is of the institution. The institution cannot rise in quality above the people who compose it; it has their blindness, their prejudices, their ignorances; it reflects their short-comings as well as their virtues.

The wide departure of the church from the social ideas of its Founder, its so complete passage out of the hands of the poor to become an association of the forehanded, has profoundly affected its standing, its influence, its vitality. The fact, universally observed but not always admitted, is a general decline. Many ministers frankly say: "We have lost the poor, and now the rest are more and more excusing themselves from church-going; our congregations get ever smaller; young men of any parts wishing to study for the ministry, ever fewer." It is matter of common observation that there is less power in the

pulpit than formerly, less enthusiasm in the pews. The very activities which might be expected to belong exclusively to the church, social settlements, work for temperance, for public health, for civic morality, are largely free from any church connection, thousands who once would have been "pillars of the temple" finding now their spiritual satisfactions apart in practical, often private, philanthropies, leaving "the house of God" sensibly more desolate. People are none the less religious, perhaps; only their religion finds other ways of manifesting itself. There is a new type of faith—if one may so speak, using an old word,—new hopes, new visions, a new ideal of humanity. The vague expectation of new developments in the order of the social world becomes ever more absorbing.

The question arises whether, as Bellamy thought,\* there is to be a great religious revival in which Christianity will be renewed and set forth in even more than its pristine purity, becoming a message to the poor, and not to the poor alone; coming this time as, in a manner, a reappearing of the Christ himself to establish his power.† Such an awakening is thinkable, and, considering the tremendous revolutionary energy stored away in the New Testament awaiting the use which socialist preachers alone can make of it without endangering their own existence, it would seem to be a consummation not only "devoutly to be wished," but reasonably to be expected. Immediate signs going to strengthen the hope are the trend to the new standard of so many

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\* *Equality*, pp. 340ff.

† See preceding chapter.

Christian ministers, and the masterful earnestness possessing their souls.

#### A GOSPEL THAT MIGHT BE PREACHED

The existing church is losing its hold on the people partly because of its capitalistic affiliation, and partly because of the abstract, insecure, unengaging character of its message. So much dealing with things unseen, with marvels and mysteries, with the life to come, is no longer satisfying; it is counted dull. Important as such preaching may be, it is mostly poured into the vacant air. Inward purification and character-building, the staple pulpit topics, we must admit are vital considerations, not to be left out of account; but, perpetually dwelt upon, they become soporific. "How to Lead the Beautiful Life," told over a thousand times, gets wearisome, stale, flat, and unprofitable, provoking in the end derision. The conditions under which we have to live, ways of improving them, specific deeds of brotherliness, are in general far more pertinent subjects of contemplation. The world that now is, the great world outside of ourselves which bears so constantly upon us, shaping our ends often in spite of ourselves and to our detriment, is something to be reckoned with, something which our minds, acting in concert with other minds, may shape to serve, instead of thwarting, our spiritual development. That here is a gospel to be preached to some purpose is fairly evident. That it would soon chain attention and win its way, there can hardly be a doubt. We have seen how the one

idea of health and healing has proved sufficient base for a religious movement the most prosperous of modern times, bringing together great and growing congregations, numerically in striking contrast with what we mostly see. An infinitely saner and broader movement, dealing with far more important concerns, proposing to turn this old world into as much of a paradise as is compatible with human nature, to establish conditions favorable to brotherliness in place of conditions obstructive, prohibitory, is already well set on foot, and might easily take on with a portion of its following a distinctly religious character, and at no distant day come to be recognized as the true church of Christ, illuminated by all later knowledge, and going straight to the realization of his kingdom in the world.

That great conception of the Master, of which socialism in its aim is the modern counterpart, slept long within the lids of the New Testament. Found on almost every page of the synoptic gospels, the thought of "the kingdom" fades gradually out of the later writings,\* and was substantially dropped when the expectation of a second advent went down. The kingdom was hardly to be thought of without a king, and as the king indefinitely delayed his coming, the idea passed out of mind, or was relegated for its realization to another world. But in the gospels the kingdom of heaven is often, usually in fact, a transformation of this present world in accordance with the Master's moral teaching, a new and better order of society,

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\*For a view of relative dates, see *The Evolution of a Great Literature* by the present writer.



based on higher principles than was the old order. In fact the very word "kingdom," if it is to have any sense at all, implies an aggregation of people, a commonwealth, a society, — in the gospel usage, a society of equals, of brothers. There was also liberty — "the liberty of the sons of God." Thus early, and thus remote from Paris, the great trinity of political ideas got itself pronounced: Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. The social order of this kingdom was not, so far as we are told, laid down in detail, much being left to the wisdom of after generations; but that in its primitive form it differed radically from the order of the rest of the world, there can be no doubt. It was naturally drawn, by the earliest church and the only one whose example in this matter has any value for us, from the life together of Jesus and his twelve disciples, and was simply communistic. Communism is historically the first step in socialism; and so in practice as well as in principle it can be asserted without fear of contradiction that socialism has a better footing in the New Testament than any one of the Christian sects.

A Socialist Christian movement is, therefore, as feasible as a Christian Socialist movement, so far as a base in the Christian scriptures and profound reverence for the Prophet of Galilee are concerned. But the movement will not take the form of a church, will not let itself become dependent upon contributions of cash or of what cash will buy. What its preachers have to give they will give without money and without price, freely as God gives it to them, and so will keep themselves from being in bondage to any man.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE NEW WORLD IN THE MAKING

In dealing with projects whose development is in the future, the temptation is strong to play the part of foreteller. But it is a hazardous piece of business, especially where the causes depended on are complex, or the *dénouement* at all remote. The insuccess of all detailed vaticinations not of the *post eventum* variety, ought to be a warning to any would-be explorer of the as yet unseen waters to moor his bark by the shores of silence, or to adventure only within ear-shot of land. So many things not dreamt of in any one's philosophy — inventions, discoveries, of epoch-making significance, subtle but far-reaching modifications of thought — are possible to occur; so many forces now controlling may become ineffective, supplanted or nullified by other forces, — that even speculative minds find it best not to particularize about what is to be even a few decades hence. What does not yet exist, and what lies beyond the reach of knowledge, have but a moderate interest for us, and efforts to set forth things out of those categories look childish and are a waste of time. Bellamy's visions into a coming century are saved from being a weariness to the flesh by frankly taking the form of romance. It is safer not to peer ahead too far, and to say, with Bernstein, that as to the future we will concern ourselves only with what is immediately before us. Nothing beyond

the merest fringe of it is to be descried with any confidence.

What we can observe is a transition taking place under our eyes. It comes out in comparing the present with the past, even the past of yesterday. We note tendencies largely continuous through a long time gone by, and which obviously have not yet run their course; and therein is the new world in its making. To be sure the story thus told is prosaic, lacking altogether the brilliancy of a picture presenting the completed work set in vivid contrast with all the uglinesses of the world we know, but it has on its side certitude and reality.

It must be remembered that the socialist programme is in the nature of an experiment, or, if you please, of a demonstration, and that it has to take its place in the endless procedure of social evolution. No sudden and sweeping change of so complex a thing as human society at its present stage is possible; what is to be expected is modification by slow degrees — such modification as has been going on with lessening sluggishness time out of mind — each forward step, with the readjustments it necessitates, preparing the way for the step to follow; the whole process being nothing other than the natural development of the social organism under the impelling force of economic principles and moral ideas. Nothing like a revolution can now be inaugurated; if for no other reason, for lack of an influential majority. And if the requisite majority were anywhere to be mustered, no people, not even the nimble and versatile Japanese, could

stand the shock of an abrupt change from the present to the socialist order. In all things, by use and wont we make our approaches to the best ways. The indispensable majority for the final step into socialism is not likely to be obtained until approaches enough have been made to render that step safe, feasible, free from any slightest apprehension that it will have to be retraced. Socialism, as nobody needs to be told, is at present far from popular; but movements in the direction of socialism *are* popular, and long have been. What more secure in the hearts of the people than the plan of educating all the children at public expense, or the plan of building libraries, art-galleries, museums, at public expense, free to all comers? Laws protecting laborers from undue exactions, affirming employers' liability for injuries, instituting old-age pensions, protecting the people from the rapacity of corporations, are popular. Every decade, capital is being subjected to regulations more and more stringent, more and more socialistic. These are the steps forward toward the goal, the means — preliminary and to be followed by others more drastic — making for the great consummation. Each advance, necessitating a readjustment of opinion and custom, paves the way for another and more considerable advance; and so the march goes on — whither, not even its opponents are in doubt.

We are generally inclined to regard with impatience the slow progress that is being made, the little sign there yet is of the complete realization of our dreams. We forget the infinite tasks involved. Some of the

preliminary steps are sadly retarded just for lack of preparation. Municipal ownership of public utilities halts on account of the astounding corruption so often brought to light in our city governments. Every time one of these disgraceful situations is unveiled, judgment is taken against enlarging the responsibilities of Common Councils. State governments, if not as bad, are yet far from being up to the requirements of a system which would lodge in the State possession and control of the chief means of industry — land, factories, facilities of transportation and of exchange — a system which calls for supreme executive ability, statesmanship, financial genius, and unimpeachable character in every department of the government and its agents. Not till we begin to see in charge of State concerns men who in private life would be held mentally adequate and morally suitable to tasks of equal importance, can we expect people to favor the project of acquiring a vast collective property to be managed by State officials. The task of preparation for the new order is great beyond estimation. We have set before ourselves so high an aim that its speedy attainment is not to be looked for; nor can we expect such an end to be furthered by any fortuitous circumstance — commotion among the nations, or some one here or there seeing a strange light. The Holy City is not going to drop down upon the world out of the skies, as the apocalypse strangely says; it has got to be built up here below by human hands, long though the work may prove, many as the failures may be.

What intensifies the difficulty is the necessity we are under of preparing for the socialistic order while encumbered with all the drawbacks of the old order, — empoisoned by the avarice the old has engendered, corrupted by its luxuries or debased by its want, unmanned by the false estimate of values instilled by its worship of Mammon. In a coming century it will be hard for anybody to believe that city officials and State legislators of our time were so given to bribe-taking that every now and then a squad of them had to be packed off to prison; that the civil authorities were so untrustworthy that the project of socializing public utilities and the means of production was stayed, the people not daring to commit these properties to the charge of their own lawmakers; and that thus a pernicious, immoral system of things was able to hold on, postponing the greatest of all reformations, by breeding an inordinate lust of gold in high places, turning them into dens of robbers. The first need of an effort to actualize socialism is public confidence in the wisdom and safety of collective ownership and management of affairs, and here we are confronted by notorious scandals in the conduct of the vastly inferior interests already under collective control.

However, it is probably right here that we are now making our most significant advance. The very fact that mismanagement of public trusts is being brought to light, that justice is being meted out to the guilty, is a sign of moral health and vigor not to be overlooked. Then, it is to be borne in mind that the

number of public officials in a country like this is very large; that the great bulk of them are under no least suspicion of betraying the trusts committed to them; that the percentage of failure among them is no greater, apparently much less, than among the agents and directors of private corporations, — which really leaves nothing to be said against swelling the volume of public business at the expense of the volume of private business. Then, too, there never was a time when so much was being said and done to quicken the public conscience, to build up civic morality. Municipal government in America, confessedly behind what it is in Europe, is receiving a marked degree of attention, not only from specialists but from men of affairs and from the reading public; from all of which we may hope that our inferiority will be overcome, perhaps even some methods devised of insuring good management, which foreigners, who have not unjustly derided us, may commend for home use.

At all events, to point to the improbity stimulated by the existing order as precluding the adoption of the socialist programme, is but an instance of that imbecility which makes prevailing wickedness an argument against reform. "People are too selfish, too untrustworthy," we are told, "to admit of their living in the high fashion that socialism prescribes; wait until the millennium." But, that advice followed, the millennium would never come. It is the Devil's own advice, given with the intent to keep things in his own hands.

The method which best promises to extirpate graft,



and that which is actually being resorted to, is to lay more and more responsibilities upon public servants, while selecting them with greater care and exercising over them a greater watchfulness. The unmistakable tendency of such a course is that the heinousness of falsity to a public trust gets ever more salient, and the fear of a State, and especially of a federal, indictment ever more wholesome. Every thief understands that robbing the United States mail is a more precarious business than robbing a private house. Hedge all public concerns about, similarly, with heavier and surer penalty for malfeasance, and even those functionaries will walk warily whose ways in private matters are suspected of crookedness.

The awakening to the need of a higher standard of civic morals is coincident with the trend toward socialistic ideas — both that unconscious trend taken by governments, and the open acceptance accorded by many of the foremost minds of our time. By persons worth noticing, socialism is no longer regarded askance as a wild scheme to be set aside with a sneer; it is seen to be a solid system of thought that has to be dealt with; it is seen to have — what the existing social order so fatally lacks — an ethical basis that cannot be impugned without impugning the Founder of Christianity, putting it in notable contrast with the great political parties as we have known them. Publicists who have been denunciatory, observing the march this movement is making, — observing, too, how its voice is ever on the side of peace, of progress, of democratic equality, of popu-

lar education, of civic order, health, and decency, — are heard to speak in a different tone.\*

Collective ownership and co-operative labor can be generally instituted with success only when the collective interest has been developed into a widely-felt, controlling sentiment. The objection now most readily made to the proposed order is, that it will not work; that the moment the individual interest ceases to be supreme, the chief spur to endeavor will be found wanting; what is everybody's business will be nobody's business, and all enterprise will be smitten with decay. We are pointed to the lack of energy so frequently observable among clerks and laborers employed by a city, as compared with that shown by employes of private firms; to the neglect and waste of property often seen in public administration and in the conduct of a society, religious or other. Here is unquestionably a grave difficulty. Overstated it may be, but that there is much in it cannot be denied. For convincing evidence one has but to watch the laborers engaged in cleaning a public street. The scene recalls the farmers' manner of working out their road-tax in the old days. Their chief study was to pass the time with as little exertion as was decently possible. So generally was this the case that the jolly old fashion of "working on the road" had to be given up, the tax collected in money, and the work turned

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\* Even ex-President Roosevelt, speaking at the Sorbonne in presence of M. Briand, the socialist Prime Minister of France, and other dignitaries of the same way of thinking, decried only "*extreme socialism*."

over to contractors. All this signifies that the collective sentiment is not yet well developed, that it has been overridden by the private interest, and that, preparatory to the new order, this sentiment of the collectivity must be cultivated and brought out by gradual advances toward socialism. A collective spirit, analogous to the spirit of the bee-hive of which Maeterlinck has told us, will have to be generated before the co-operative commonwealth can be fully realized. That this is a task Herculean, not to be accomplished short of a considerable lapse of time, is a fact as unwelcome as it is obvious. But in the long run nothing is gained by blinking the facts.

World-making on the socialist plan will proceed from the basis of the world as it is, just as have all advantageous transformations in the past, whether of the physical globe or of human society. Catastrophic changes in both have taken place, but they are unprofitable and will hardly recur to any sweeping extent now that the forces of the material and the moral world have lost so much of their primordial wildness. What there is that is good in the world at present — and there is much, notwithstanding what in hot haste is said to the contrary in contemplation of abounding evils — will be conserved: all civilizing and humanizing institutions not rendered superfluous by abolition of the evils they were designed to counteract; means of education and enlightenment, social and religious fraternities; whatever we now have that goes to brighten and better the world, albeit in the new conditions wiser modes

of conducting the work may in many cases be found. It is hardly to be thought that the church, for instance, will retain its present way of dispensing the gospel, or of dispensing *with* the gospel, whichever may seem the more accurate form of expression. A *modus operandi* will have to be found that will break down the walls, real or imaginary, which shut out certain classes; a style of teaching must be inaugurated which will meet common needs; broader, more varied human services must be instituted, applicable to all sorts and conditions of men; a leveling process, taking the loftiness out of those whom an excess of earthly good has led to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, and a lifting up of those on whom fortune has less complacently smiled. For, be it remembered, socialism is not going to do all the needed leveling to make people really "sit together in heavenly places." There will always be distinctions — distinctions in private property even, though vastly less than now — on which people, if they choose, can feel themselves "set up." Something will be left for religion to do to realize the full blessedness of the kingdom of heaven, to bring in the era of complete fraternity.

Worlds are slowly made, and the new world of socialism will be no exception to the rule, though now and then in things spiritual and things material "one day is as a thousand years." The transition will go on for a long time yet as it now goes on, that is, in the way of an unconscious or half-conscious growth, induced in the main by economic causes, causes in-

herent in the nature of things and not to be resisted, but also in a measure and increasingly by voluntary causes, by the gradual uprising of the moral will to shape the world consciously after an ideal pattern. This as it comes in, and come it surely must, will be the greatest glory in the whole history of earth and man, a real coming to consciousness of Creative Power in the human creature whereby he will become more than a product of circumstances, will become the maker of circumstances, bringing conditions into conformity with his own ideas, instead of himself being conformed, body and soul, to the conditions in which he happens to be placed. Master of economic forces by which through the ages, for better or for worse, he has been dominated, he will enter upon his ripe majority, God's freeman, right lordly ruler of the earth, which he will exploit with a good conscience — no longer exploiting his brother — making it yield him its utmost wealth of bounty.

This glory in its fulness is remote, and to be glimpsed only in a general way. Of "times and seasons" we may not speak, nor paint in any least detail of the picture. But the dim outline of a vision will stay the longing heart, strengthen the toiling hand and brace the feeble knees; for, happily, some things that are vague are among the things that are surest.

As no clear account of the world as it will be some centuries hence is possible, so we cannot once for all fix our ideal, and say definitely and precisely what form it is best to have things take. We are accustomed to say, speaking generally, that the instruments

of production are to be socialized, pass into the hands of the collectivity; but just how sweeping this change is to be, no one is in a position to affirm. The part of wisdom here is a frank empiricism; and this clearly leads up to the conclusion, that so much, and only so much, of the business of the world will be taken over by the State as experiment shows can be best administered by the State, and with the best results to all concerned. Certainly the industries will not all be taken over at once. Such a thing is obviously out of the question; if for no other reason, from the impossibility of suddenly calling into being a bureau of proportions to assume such immeasurable responsibilities. The change, whatever its ultimate extent, can come only by degrees, a single branch of industry at a time, each entered upon tentatively, to settle by experiment what can be done; a gradual, cautious transition avoiding any great shock to the world of affairs, and avoiding also the fatal confusion into which the new management itself would be sure to fall were it to undertake at once the whole task which may in the end be assigned to it. Just as the State has demonstrated its ability to run the post-office successfully, and with benefits to the public doubtless incalculably beyond what would otherwise have accrued, it may go on to take charge of the means of transportation, and, later, take over one and another of the great branches of production; proving the feasibility of each step as it goes, demonstrating the advantages of State ownership and direction, or, failing in some instance, leaving room to think that

private ownership has still a part to play and is properly to be left in charge of certain lines of business.

Then, too, it is not altogether clear how, in the new social order, the State, that is, the State government, is or can be the ideal industrial head, representing the collectivity. To be that, it assuredly will first have to undergo no little transformation. A monarch or potential monarch with a mighty army behind him fits not well into this scheme. The political interest with its armaments and its variously veiled autocracies must decrease as the social interest increases, giving place to a government of the people by the people and for the people. It is easy to see that little or nothing might be gained by substituting for the capitalists as employers the government as we know it. The object to be sought is the elimination of the wage and profit system, not a change of masters; and for that the State must be turned into a vast social-industrial organization, the head one with the rest of the body. The process may be long, but the beginning is near. Starting out toward this ideal as a Social Democracy, and becoming increasingly industrial, the State will gradually lose in good part its political character, matters political becoming more and more dwarfed beside the magnitude of the great industrial undertakings. Something of this sort is at least our expectation, though no one can say just what course events will take.

The perpetuation of great fortunes in families, by inheritance from generation to generation through the centuries, is an evil, destructive of any equality



of privilege, keeping up on no ground of personal merit or desert a distinction of classes which socialism would obliterate. But whether in our ideal of society inheritance should be altogether abolished, or subjected to a heavy and rapidly progressive tax that shall absorb the heritage after two or three successions, remains undetermined, with much to say in favor of the less stringent mode of procedure.\*

The great achievement that socialism has before it is, from one point of view, the effacement of class distinctions through its uplift of the burden-bearers. In the nature of the case, so inestimable a triumph is yet afar off — awaits the completing and working out of the programme. But there is a preliminary unification to be accomplished, one that is now going on, though with less celerity than might be wished — a unification of those in the ranks, a joining of hands of all believers, effecting, as an earnest of the final consummation, an effacement of class-feeling among socialists themselves. For it has come about, and must be taken as of good augury, that many who are never counted as proletarians are firm supporters of this movement: students, teachers, professional men and women, even some persons of considerable wealth. Among these converts we note a goodly array of Christian ministers of various denominations, whose adherence to the cause is the more to be appreciated in that, in some instances, it has involved grievous sacrifices. Now, having applauded to the echo the

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\* See Chapter IV.

founders when they declare that the uprising of the fourth estate to take control of things by force of numbers will make an end of class struggles and class prejudices, it needs for us socialists to set alongside this fine sentiment of harmony the practical illustration of giving to those who, out of whatever circle, have come to our help, a hearty and enthusiastic welcome. That, after what has passed, there should be suspicion and grudges, shrinking back and undisguised ill-will, is not unnatural; these manifestations, while bringing their twinge of pain, will be understood, and allowance for them will be made; but it were better, more consonant with our ultimate purpose of harmonizing the world, and would promise more assuredly for that end, to harmonize ourselves, to cement the brotherhood by a cordial greeting to all comers.

The ill-feeling alluded to, or rather the lack of a good understanding, often enough to be seen in our country where class prejudices are less pronounced than in the old world, is most shown by socialists of foreign birth who in their native habitat acquired a bitterness of feeling hardly yet generated here. Over there it is really asking a good deal of a working-man to have any heart-to-heart intercourse with a well-dressed stranger. If one approaches him, he is displeased at the outset by what seems to him the condescension, the patronage of the thing. If you are to speak with any acceptance to a throng of workers in London or Paris, you not only need to command the dialect of your hearers, you must have their

bronzed faces and hardened hands, have on the garb they wear, be one of them. It is said to be practically impossible for one of the English gentry, though socialist decided as Marx, personally to reach the workers to any purpose in any one of the great industrial centers. If they are socialists, they are unable to see how he can be one.

Here, then, is a little world of our own that is first to be made new before attempting to carry the greater world. The task ought not to be beyond our capabilities. It must distress a socialist lecturer to see his brother toilers refuse to hear him when he speaks in a church; but he will keep on speaking in churches and out of churches, in the determined effort to break down a bar that should never have been put up. The wise leader of another movement, to whose broad humanism this movement of ours may trace the origin — not of its form, to be sure, but of its best ideas — was careful not to restrict his fellowship to any one class, and encouraged the doing of his work by whatsoever person, in whosoever name, saying, "He who is not against us is for us." \*

Socialism is in its theoretical stage; we must know it is not yet, like an architect's plan and specifications, a fixed and definite scheme of things to be worked

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\* Mark 9: 40. The words of contrary sound (Matt. 12: 30; Luke 11: 23) are utterly out of connection where they stand, seem to be thrust in, to have come out of a later time of strife and divisions, — at all events are not to be taken as canceling this saying which has clear and pointed application in the context.

out in accordance with preconceived determinations, but a developing system of thought of which the horizon before us advances as we advance. To what the fathers saw, their sons see something to add, and from that earlier vision something to retrench. In these widely-extending fields no one any more can pretend to speak the final word.

“New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;

They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of Truth.”

To be sure, this movement differs from previous social changes in being in some measure a voluntary movement, a conscious reaching out for something which, if not clearly defined, has yet some perceptible outline. The advent of the existing order was not so. Nobody consciously sought to bring it in; it was not a *cause* evoking enthusiasm. It grew up under the blind compulsion of economic law, and of other forces hardly less blind, — political, moral, religious, — of all of which it was the resultant, and not one of which ever had it consciously in view. The volitional element in the new movement is indeed as yet only partial, present in only a comparatively few minds, and with them to slight purpose save as concerns the immediate future. We dream and ponder, as men have always dreamt and pondered, and some vague expectation floats at times, perhaps, as a vision before us; or, failing the sight, the plaintive voice of one

like ourselves weary of waiting is heard across the ages, breaking over us like a wave from far-off shores and rolling on to other shores no less remote, waking always the same reflections.

"One saint to another I heard say, 'How long?'  
I listened, but naught more I heard of the song;  
The shadows are gliding through city and plain;  
How long shall the night with its shadows remain?

"How long ere shall shine in this glimmer of things  
The light of which prophet in prophecy sings;  
And the gates of that city be open whose sun  
No more to the west in its circuit shall run?"

Such longings pertain to us; they give a religious glow to our thoughts, but have hardly any other use. What we have to deal with is the world of to-day and the world of to-morrow in the rather restricted meaning of "to-morrow." We ourselves need not expect to see the fulfilment of our dream, the creation of an earthly Paradise, the ushering in of any millennium. We can hold up our ideal, give it to others, spread it far and wide, trusting that as it goes it will gain in wisdom and in beauty, and knowing that when it has gone far enough, won over a working majority, it will realize itself in a world which, incomplete as it may yet remain, will be infinitely brighter and fairer than the world as it now is.

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